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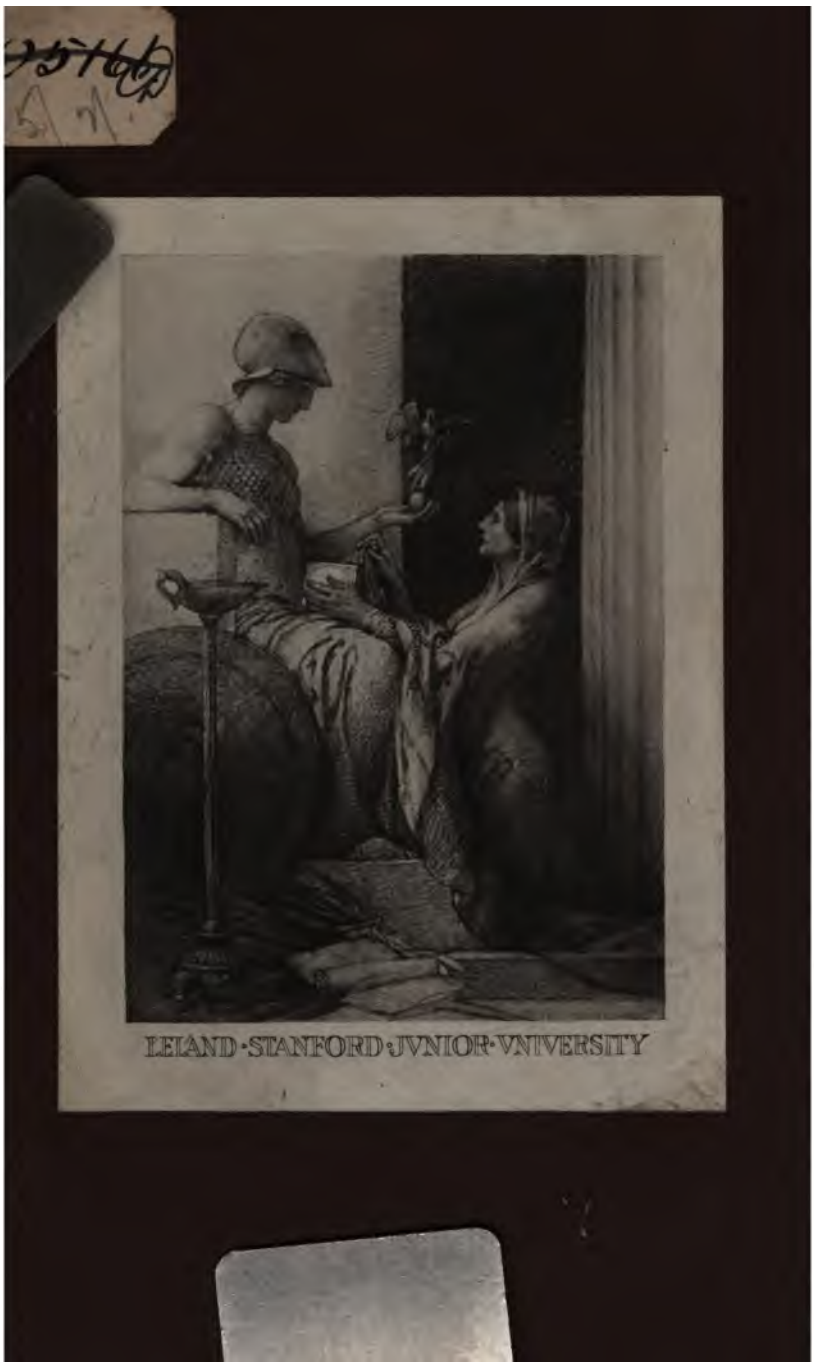
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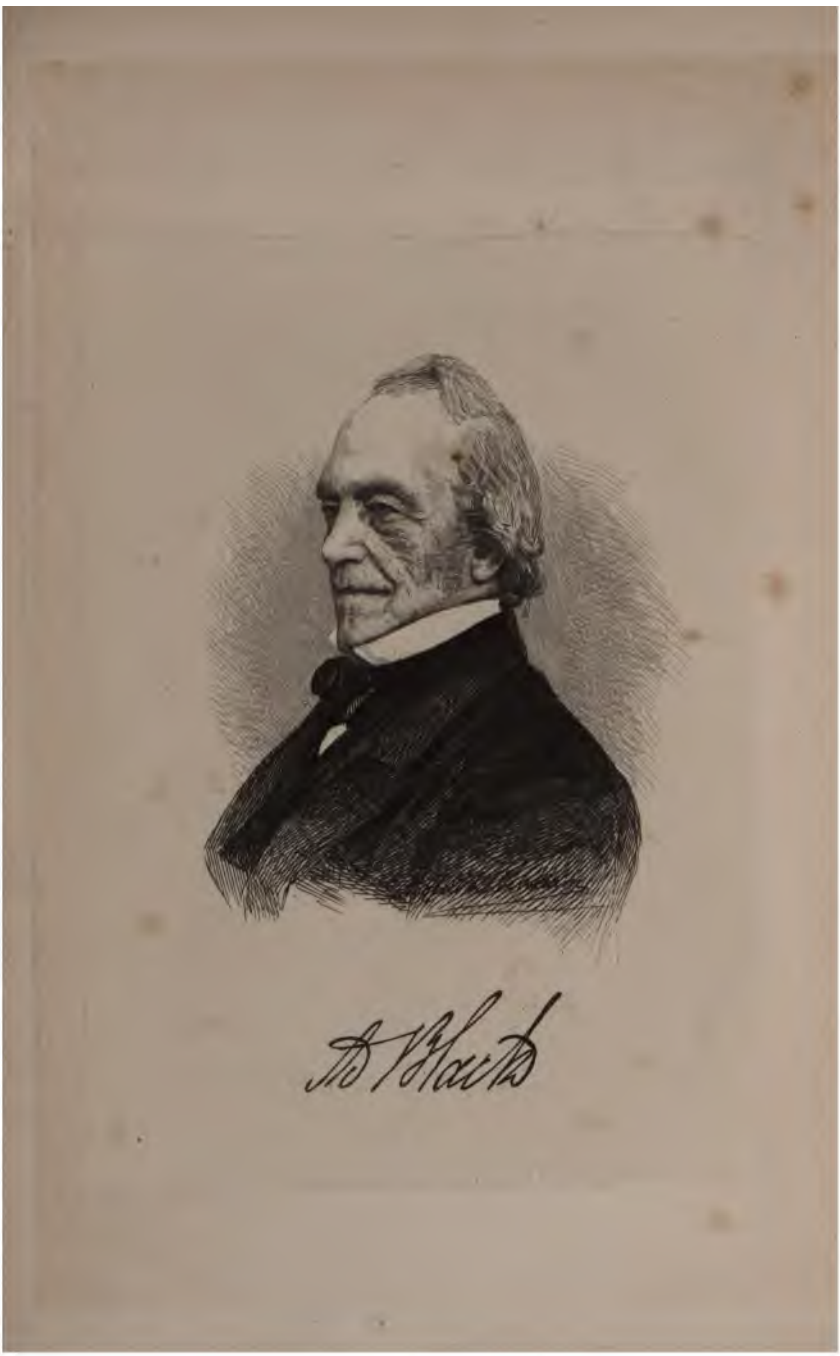
MEMOIRS OF ADAM BLACK



MEMOIRS

OF

ADAM BLACK

EDITED BY

ALEXANDER NICOLSON, LL.D.

SECOND EDITION

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE suggestion having been made that an Index would be of service, it has been supplied in this edition. The opportunity has also been taken to make some corrections kindly furnished by friends, and to append a List of the Principal Books published by Mr. Black and by his firm down to the time when he formally retired from business.

November 1885.

PREFACE.

BIOGRAPHY nowadays is so alarmingly overdone, that a society for the prevention of the evils it brings must soon be recognised as one of the 'felt wants' of our time. The possibility of being anatomised, for the benefit of society, after life's fitful fever, by some cruelly candid friend, may well be regarded as adding unspeakably to the terrors of death. Some wise people, now and in former days, have chosen to write, and even publish, their own biographies, rather than leave them to be done by too partial or sternly truthful friends. This practice has much in its favour. Even the softening touches and cunning omissions of the autobiographer are more agreeable, and not less true to nature, than the indiscreet or painful revelations of a needlessly faithful friend. The kindly treatment of their father by Shem and Japheth is still to be preferred to the brutal realism of Ham.

The life of a man who for more than half a century held a leading place as a citizen of Edinburgh must be considered worthy of some permanent record. The only doubt in this case arose from a

consideration of what would have been agreeable to the man himself. Though a prominent public character, and of great personal force, he was very modest in his estimate of his own deserts and shrank from anything like display. The suggestion made during his lifetime, of that form of Testimonial which was realised after his death in a public Statue, was not less distressing to him personally than it was honourable to him as a citizen.

The lapse of time between his death and the appearance of this Memoir is not in accordance with modern practice, which allows as little delay as possible from the death of the deceased to the publication of his biography. The sentiments that influence that practice are not those of the publishers of this volume, or of its compiler.

It would scarcely have been possible to have produced any biography of Adam Black worth reading if he had not left some autobiographical reminiscences for the benefit of his family. They were not meant for any wider circle; certainly not for print. They show no care for literary form, or even for historical and chronological completeness. They are, notwithstanding, quite fit to be printed as he wrote them; so much so that the editor would have preferred to have given them, with some alterations and additions, instead of his own narrative, which is only 'second-hand.'

They were commenced in London in February

1864, during Mr. Black's attendance in Parliament, and finished in 1872, in the 89th year of his age. They were committed to his eldest son, Charles, in these words :—'London, February 28, 1864. My dear Charles—As I believe my children know very little of the history of their father, I am induced to write to you, my eldest son, to give a short sketch of a life which cannot be far from its close, and which death might soon draw a veil over for ever.'

Mr. Black had at this date entered on his 81st year, but was in full vigour of body and mind. For nine years and eleven months more he lived in comparatively good health, with mental faculties unimpaired, and continued to make additions to the reminiscences, which he entitled *My Pilgrimage*, down to 2d April 1872, when he made his last entry. He then recorded his attendance at the funeral of his dear old friend and last surviving school-fellow, Claud Muirhead, who died 28th March 1872, in his 90th year.

Mr. Black followed him, at the same venerable age, on 24th January 1874.

He never kept a diary, except when he was from home, and then it was entirely for the benefit of his family. He wrote few letters, except on public or political business, and those he received from such eminent men as Jeffrey and Macaulay, Abercromby and Campbell, were almost exclusively on questions of political or local interest. In this respect the materials for this Memoir were comparatively meagre.

His autobiographical reminiscences are also singularly wanting in those anecdotes and observations on passing events which give so much interest to memoirs otherwise unimportant. He could tell a story well, but he had no desire to figure as a chronicler of anecdotes, and for mere gossip he had a positive distaste.

Considering that the life of which these pages give an outline extended to ninety years, and was that of an active, bold, outspoken man, it is impossible to say more in his praise than that he said, wrote, or did nothing, in all that long time, which any one having regard for his memory would wish to blot from remembrance. He had some hard fights, but he always fought fairly, and never said anything in private which he would have feared to utter plainly in the market-place. He kept up no feuds or grudges, and honestly grieved to be on any but friendly terms with good men.

His life and doings are interesting primarily to citizens of Edinburgh, and for them this book is chiefly meant. As the record of a long and useful life, of patient continuance in well-doing, with a single eye to duty and the good of the community to which he belonged, it will have served its purpose if it stimulate others to prove themselves equally worthy of the respect of their native city.

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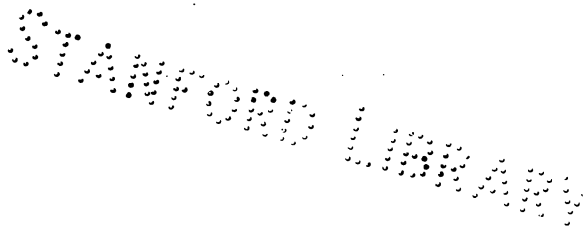

CHAPTER I.

1784–1807.

In the summer of 1779 a young mason from Edinburgh, named Charles Black, was working at the Fly Bridge, about two miles below Melrose, and lodged in the miller's house on the farm of Drygrange. The tenant of that farm was a good man named Adam Nicol, and his wife was Alison Bunyan, a high-spirited little woman. They had two or three sons, and one daughter, Isabella. The young mason became a frequent and esteemed visitor at their house, and found special favour in the eyes of the daughter, who before very long became his wife. He could not have saved much money, for he was just twenty-three when he married, and a mason's wages at that time were about a fourth of what they are now. But self-denial and care could make them go far, and Charles Black told his son Adam that 'he thought he would soon make rich when he found he could get 8s. a week.' The bride brought him no *tocher* in money,

but she had her 'providing' of 'napery,' and the other articles which all respectable Scottish parents were accustomed to give their daughters at marriage. The young couple were quite prepared to face life and the world with their slender means; and the bride's parents thought they could trust her safely to Charles Black, in which they were not mistaken. The young couple removed at once to Edinburgh, and took up their abode in the lower floor of a house on the west side of Charles Street, a very respectable locality, leading into what was then the most aristocratic quarter of Edinburgh, George Square. The front room was furnished as a shop, and stocked with butter, cheese, potatoes, and other farm produce supplied from Drygrange, for which the capable young housewife found a ready market. This sensible speculation had doubtless been all arranged before the marriage. The united earnings of the young couple enabled Charles Black in a few years to commence business as a master-builder, in which he prospered so well that the shop was given up; and on his death, in 1826, at the age of seventy, he left a moderate patrimony to each of his three sons and three daughters. His excellent wife survived him for twenty-one years, and died in 1847 at the ripe age of eighty-nine.

The second of the three sons was Adam, who was born in Charles Street on 20th February 1784. Eleven years before that, Francis Jeffrey

had been born up a stair a few doors farther south in the same street.

Adam Black's earliest reminiscence was the illumination of Edinburgh in 1789, on the temporary recovery of the health of the king, George III. The joy of the nation at the restoration of their sovereign to the use of his reason was sincere, and nowhere could it have been more splendidly exhibited than in Edinburgh, 'throned on crags.'

About the same time he saw from the corner house in Drummond Street, which was then being built, the laying of the foundation-stone of the University. The ground on which College Street, and the portion of Nicolson Street reaching to Nicolson Square, now stand, was then occupied by a garden, sloping up southward from the old 'Kirk o' Field,' where the University buildings were erected. A number of people had climbed up into one of the trees on that slope, and little Adam Black heard the cries and saw the commotion, when the tree, with all its living load, came crashing to the ground.

When about four or five years of age, he was sent to a school in the Pleasance, on the south side of the town, kept by a man of the name of Noy, from Mrs. Black's native district, probably his chief recommendation. It was of the old-fashioned sort. 'Our schoolbook,' he says, 'was the Bible, or any other book we chose to bring. No grammar was taught, no geography; no explanation was given of the

meaning of words; no questions were put, except the questions of the Shorter Catechism.'

This school Adam Black attended till he was seven years of age, when he could read, write, and do a little arithmetic, had learned as much, perhaps, as was good for him. His religious education was certainly not neglected. Family worship was as regular at home as breakfast and supper; and on Sunday the children, after being twice at church, had to learn the Shorter Catechism, 'with proofs,' under penalty of going without the luxury of tea and bread and butter, allowed to them only on that blessed day. Their good father was not content with hearing them repeat their lessons like parrots; he endeavoured to explain them; and when all were gathered together on Sunday evening, 'we received from him,' says Adam, 'the most affectionate and pious admonitions.' Those of a more advanced generation may look back with a sympathetic shudder on such Sundays as these, filled up with religious exercises from morning to night, 'spending the whole time,' as the Shorter Catechism prescribes, 'in the public and private exercise of God's worship, except so much as is required for works of necessity and mercy.' But it cannot be denied that our country and its people have owed much to the stern discipline of our fathers, and that from such lessons as were taught and practised in such houses as that of Charles Black 'old Scotia's grandeur springs.'

About the beginning of October 1791, Adam was taken by his father to the High School Yards, down Infirmary Street, and entered as a pupil in the first class of the High School of Edinburgh, at that time, as it still is, the chief school of the city. 'I recollect,' he says, 'as we went along, he met an acquaintance, who asked him where he was going. My father said he was "takin' the laddie to the Hie Schule." "He's surely ower young," said the friend. "Oh, he's seven years auld," said my father, which I kept in mind.' The teacher under whom he was placed, and sat for the next four years, was Christison, afterwards Professor of Latin in the University of Edinburgh, and still better remembered as father of Sir Robert Christison. Adam was one of the youngest boys in the class, and ill prepared for it, Latin being, of course, the one great subject. He had little time to learn his lessons at home, where he was generally occupied in helping his mother and going messages; and his elder brother Frank, who learned his father's trade, could give him little or no help. His progress, therefore, was small. 'These four years,' he says, 'were years of cruel bondage. The great educator was the *tawse*, a long thick leathern thong, cut into stripes, which, brought down with great force on the hand, was very painful, often leaving marks of coagulated blood. Every day this teacher of the young idea how to shoot was administered more or less liberally; no boy altogether escaped.'

At the end of those four years Adam went into the Rector's class, where he sat for two years more, with pleasure and profit. The *tawse* was not the principal engine of education here. The master condescended to recognise the poor boys as human creatures, with certain tastes and feelings, not unworthy of sympathy, even in a Dominie. 'Dr. Adam,' says A. B., 'put himself on a more friendly footing with his pupils, and I think was rather kind to me. He was not like some of the other masters, who showed a partiality for the sons of the great. The old man, from his own hard struggles with poverty in early life, was rather favourable to the sons of those in the humbler ranks, and, from his constant reading of Greek and Roman authors, and admiration of the patriotic Republican heroes of classic days, he had imbibed a considerable spirit of Republicanism. It is said that when publicly examining his class he asked a boy the Latin for a King, and was answered *Rex*. He asked again, "Give me another word for King," and was answered *Tyrannus*. "Right, sir," said the Rector, with peculiar emphasis.'

The summer holidays during these years were pleasantly spent at Drygrange, and delightful it must have been to exchange the weary routine of the High School and Charles Street for the lovely banks of the Tweed, and the endless diversions of autumn.

Among the rougher amusements of boy life in town were the pitched battles, or *bickers*, between

the boys of one district or school and those of another. These were part of Sir Walter Scott's education, and also of Adam Black's. The aristocratic boys of George Square, sons of peers, law lords, and other dignitaries, came out against the 'blackguards' of the Bristo Street quarter, as they called them, of whom Adam was one. He had friendly relations, however, with some of them, who daily passed, as he did, to the High School, through Middleton's Entry, then the only opening from the George Square district to the South Bridge. Among these were the two sons of Napier of Merchiston, whose house was at the north-east corner of George Square. The eldest of them was 'Charley,' afterwards Admiral Sir Charles, on whom Adam Black had the pleasure, in due time, as Lord Provost, of conferring the freedom of the city of Edinburgh, and whom, still later, he met regularly as a member of the House of Commons.

He had lively recollections of disturbances in those days, of a more serious kind, representing the widening breach and conflict between the rulers of the country and the ruled, between the powers that were and the powers that were to be. For some years the public mind had been agitated with questions of Parliamentary and Burgh Reform, and societies were formed for the promotion of these objects by persons called the Friends of the People, but regarded by all 'well-disposed' persons (*i.e.* persons disposed to believe that the King and his ministers could do

no wrong), as enemies of the State. The effect of the Revolution in France in exciting the public mind at that time can hardly now be realised. It divided all society into two distinct factions, the friends of Order and the friends of Liberty. There was as much of dread and tyranny on the one side as there was of extravagant hopes and alarming prophecies on the other. The old fools on the one side naturally thought that the end of the world was coming; and the young fools on the other thought that the Saturnian reign was returning. The number of petitions presented to Parliament, and of pamphlets weekly issued from the press, all about Reform and cognate subjects, was endless. In no part of the kingdom was there more intelligent thought and keen feeling on political questions than in Edinburgh, and nowhere was it watched and frowned on more severely. The real king of Scotland at this time was Henry Dundas, and no man ever ruled with a rod of iron so well and pleasantly as he did. He hated change and all its promoters heartily, but he loved his country, and those of his countrymen who knew him best, and had felt the benefit of his influence, loved him heartily, and in due time raised a monument expressive of their gratitude, the extravagant height of which truly indicates the measure of their admiration.

Lord Cockburn, in his *Memorials*, gives a very graphic and fair account of the political state of

Edinburgh about this time. The way in which Friends of the People were looked after, and had their names taken down by contemptible spies set to watch their meeting-places, seems laughable now, but was at the time not only very exasperating, but of serious menace and import. Adam Black's father, like most thinking tradesmen, was entirely in sympathy with the Friends of the People; but, with characteristic Scottish caution, he did not join any of their associations, having no desire to be set down as a 'dangerous' or 'auspicious' person by 'the watch' of the city. His wife, who had the spirit of her mother, expressed herself more openly and emphatically, as women generally do, in favour of liberty, and her boy Adam listened, no doubt, with appreciative interest, to many a talk on the questions of the day.

To see a newspaper regularly has always been considered in Scotland, in towns at least, as clear a necessity and sign of civilisation as a seat in church. This is perhaps one of the chief reasons of that persistent and provoking liberalism of Scotland, which has so often exercised the critical mind in the regions of Fleet Street and Pall Mall. Charles Black could not afford a paper for himself at 1s. 6d. a-week; the *Caledonian Mercury* or *Edinburgh Evening Courant* thrice a-week at 6d., or the *Edinburgh Advertiser* twice a-week at 9d. But he joined with three or four friends in getting a

paper between them, which was passed from one to the other. The paper chosen was the *Courant*, which they thought was, of the three, 'least subservient to the ruling powers.' That venerable organ, the oldest of British newspapers, still continues to instruct a select portion of the Scottish public.

Edinburgh had long been famous for rough and dangerous mobs. Adam saw some of them in his youth, and lived long enough to see the time when they had ceased to be violent, though still formidable. He had a lively recollection of what he witnessed in 1792, on the King's birthday, 4th June, one of the holidays always marked by a demonstration of popular feeling. He was playing in George Square, when he saw 'a squad of masons coming up from Buccleuch Place, carrying an effigy of Dundas on the top of a pole. They turned into the south side of the square, and stopped opposite a house seven or eight doors to the west, where Dundas and a party had been dining. They set fire to the effigy, and commenced breaking the windows, when Dundas's company opened the door, seemingly prepared to give battle. Captain Duncan, afterwards Admiral and Lord Camperdown, with all the heroism of a true British tar, came out flourishing a golf club round his head, charged the mob, and broke the line for a little distance. But the enemy began to close in upon him, and his retreat was in danger of being cut

off, when he was struck by one of the legs of the effigy thrown at him. He wisely made his escape into the house; but, before shutting the door, he turned round and showed his contempt for his assailants by clapping his hand upon his stern! During all this time,' says Adam, 'I was sitting on the top of a lamp-pillar, enjoying the fun. The mob, at first but trifling, had now become alarming, and was pouring into the square from all quarters, when I saw my father hurrying down the square. He got hold of my brother and me, and pulled us home, where we were kept close for the rest of the evening. The mob now filled not only the square, but Charles Street and part of Bristo Street, and was still increasing. At length troops were brought from the Castle, and posted across the openings into the square. I saw a division posted across the head of Charles Street, with a dense mob before them. The captain must have waited with considerable patience before giving the fatal order to fire, for I had been sent to bed, and was fast asleep before that happened. When the troops did fire, it was inevitable that many should be killed and wounded. Some of the soldiers accidentally or designedly fired over the heads of the people, but there was considerable danger of some of the balls going through the windows of the houses in Bristo Street. I believe some did pass through, but our house was on the opposite side of the street, and safe.'

'On the next birthday,' he says, 'they began to break the windows of Dundas's house, which was then on the east side of George Square, when he had a party of yeomanry in the house, some of whom I saw rush out, sword in hand, and chase the mob. One unfortunate fellow in the retreat stumbled and fell, and the mob took unpleasant vengeance on his white breeches. The mobbing was repeated on a third occasion, but was more effectually quelled by the press-gang brought up from Leith.'

Among the other privileges which the roughs of the city in those days considered themselves entitled to exercise on the King's birthday was that of maltreating every man with a good coat on his back, such as in a London mob would be called 'a bloated haristocrat.' If he were not sufficiently dexterous or lucky to escape, he was arrested and made a 'burgher' on the spot, by being lifted up and brought down with force on a wooden box placed in the middle of the street. If he escaped this rude process, he was punished by being pelted with mud from head to foot.

There were also what were called 'meal-mobs' occasionally, when oatmeal rose in price beyond what was considered tolerable. The meal was sent in from the country on the market day, and sold in the Meal Market, a court in the Cowgate. 'I have seen mobs,' says A. B., 'principally composed of women, attack the carts, get at the meal bags, carry off some in their

laps, and spill more on the street, while the constables with their batons laid about them.'

By 'constables' here are meant the members of the old Town Guard, who were the only police of Edinburgh up to 1817, when they were succeeded by a more efficient body of men, selected, not for their past achievements, but for their promise for the future. The old guard were mostly old soldiers, and though sufficiently picturesque in appearance, with their imposing uniform, and Lochaber axes, were not much of a terror to evildoers. The boys made fun of them, and it was one of the fixed laws of war among the 'bickerers,' that when the Town Guard veterans interfered to stop their Homeric combats, both sides united to 'bicker,' and, as a matter of course, completely to rout, the battered old warriors, not a few of whom had smelt powder at Falkirk and Culloden. One of them particularly deserves mention, Duncan Macintyre, the sweetest of Gaelic poets, and *par excellence* the bard of the chase. Like Horace with his shield at Philippi, Duncan had ingloriously left his broadsword at Falkirk, his heart having been much more with the golden-haired youth from 'yont the seas,' than with the heavy-jowled representative and avenger of the 'wee German lairdie.' Duncan attained the height of his modest ambition when he became a private in the Edinburgh Town Guard, of which he was the only member that left in imperishable verse some graphic record of the fact.

To know what church a man or boy goes to is considered of great importance in Scotland. Adam's father was a member of the Church of Scotland, but he had connected himself with Lady Glenorchy's congregation, which was half independent, because he thought there was more of 'life' in it than in most of the other churches; and he was probably right. Moderatism, the genteel rational form of Christianity, was then dominant, not only in Edinburgh, but generally through Scotland, so far at least as the clergy were concerned. It may fairly be said that the great mass of the Scottish population, with its 'perfervid' nature, has always desired, and still does, something more warm and moving than old Moderatism or new Broad Churchism supplies. 'Light and sweetness' are very desirable, but the descendants of those who bled with Wallace, or burned with Wishart, are made of sterner stuff than quite to appreciate them yet.

Lady Glenorchy had imbibed in England the religious opinions and zeal of Lady Huntingdon, a great friend of John Newton and Cowper, and generally of what was considered worthy of being called 'Evangelical religion,' which was specially strong on the 'Atonement' and 'Substitution,' and, generally speaking, has its sentiments most clearly expressed in the Olney Hymn commencing—

'There is a fountain filled with blood.'

This good lady built, at her own sole expense, in 1772, the chapel called by her name, in the full and earnest belief that she was thereby doing the very best service possible for the inhabitants of Edinburgh. She did not formally connect it with the Church of Scotland, and rightly, but she desired that the services of ministers of that church should be employed on all suitable occasions. In Scotland at that time the Lord's Supper as a rule was administered only once a-year in rural, and twice a-year in town districts. The practice in Lady Glenorchy's church was to have it once in six weeks. Some of the Established Church ministers would not countenance this novelty by assisting on such occasions. Among these was the Reverend John Colquhoun of Leith, a man of the severest orthodoxy and extreme solemnity of demeanour. Mr. Black heard the following anecdote of him :—'On one Sacrament Sunday morning, his wife being desirous to have him nicely rigged out for the occasion, had his coat well brushed, his shirt white as snow, and his bands hanging handsomely on his breast, and when she surveyed her gudeman she was so delighted with his comely appearance that she suddenly took him round the neck and kissed him. Johnny, however, was so offended by this carnal proceeding that he debarred his wife from the Sacrament that day!'

The minister of Lady Glenorchy's was Dr. Jones, who was much thought of in Evangelical circles, but

made no agreeable impression on the young mind of Adam. This is his description :—'Dr. Jones was a little "gudgy" man, seemingly fully sensible of his own dignity, and a great favourite with his own people, who could understand what he said. His utterance was rapid, and he would proceed for a considerable time in a low key, then suddenly dart up into a shriek, which he would continue for a minute or two, and again sink suddenly down to the low scale. As for me, though I attended the chapel with my parents till I was about twelve or fourteen years of age, I never understood one word he said. I sat there two hours in the forenoon, and two hours in the afternoon, every Sunday, "horn-idle." I recollect occasionally trying if I could make out what he was saying, but my imagination was more powerful than my understanding, and I sometimes made myself believe that I heard what was ridiculous nonsense, which I amused my friends by repeating to them. But it was a terrible penance to sit there wearying till he finished the last head of his discourse.'

At the close of his sixth year at the High School, Adam Black occupied a respectable place in the Rector's class, being among the ten or twelve boys at the top, who could read Livy *ad aperturam libri.* He was now thirteen, and during the next year he attended no classes. A vague notion was entertained for some time of bringing him up as a minister, and it was therefore decided that Adam

should go to the University. His father thought that the Greek class would be sufficient to begin with, as he had already learned so much Latin. He was accordingly entered with Professor Dalziel in the autumn of 1798, and attended the class till the end of March 1799. It was the custom then, which unfortunately has not yet been got rid of, to begin with the alphabet, many students from the country never having learned even that. The consequence was that most of the boys who had made some progress in the Greek grammar, at the High School or elsewhere, did not trouble themselves with the lessons, and got into an idle habit.[1] Professor Dalziel was an elegant scholar, and pleasant as a teacher, but Adam did not profit much by the class. 'The greatest advantage I derived from it,' he says, 'was the instruction he gave us just before the class broke up. He gave us a list of books we ought to read during the vacation; and as we had the privilege of the College library, I read them almost all.'

Meantime the critical question as to his future occupation had been solved differently from what had been at one time imagined. His parents, influenced by the Independent ministers brought from England by the Haldanes, adopted their religious principles, and Adam heartily concurred. The idea

[1] The teaching of Greek in the High School was introduced in 1772 under Dr. Adam. The innovation was opposed by the Senatus Academicus!

of his becoming a minister was now abandoned, and he was left to choose for himself. 'As I had been always fond of reading,' he says, 'I thought it would be a pleasant trade to be a bookseller, to which my father did not object.' Together they went, calling at various booksellers' shops, inquiring if an apprentice was wanted. They were not very lucky, but they made the best selection they could. 'We found two, both of the "old fogey" type—Dickson, up a stair on the south side of the High Street, near the Cross, and John Fairbairn, in a small shop in Hunter Square, in the corner between the Square and Blair Street. Neither of them was very prepossessing, but I preferred Fairbairn.'

On 20th March 1799, Adam, at fifteen years of age, entered on what he calls 'a dreary, disgusting servitude, in which I wasted five of the best years of my life, with associates from whom I learned much evil and no good.'

The picture his memory retained of John Fairbairn was unpleasant, and his estimate of him was very different from that of Archibald Constable, who speaks of him as a good friend, and a 'most careful, respectable, and worthy man.' But Constable's relations to him were of a very different character, and he had good reason to speak kindly of him, being one of his residuary legatees.

Here are the apprentice's reminiscences, not softened even by the mellowing distance of seventy

years:—'Good masters endeavour to promote the happiness and improvement of those under them, but ours seemed to consider it his duty to prevent our enjoyment, and to secure only his own profit out of us. He was a little fat elderly man, with a rubicund face, and a wart on the side of his nose. I made some verses upon him, of which I recollect only two lines—

> He once in his life dropped a tear, but it froze,
> Before it had trickled half down his red nose.

Somehow or other he had heard of this composition, which made him very angry with me. He resided in a small house in Broughton, then a suburb of Edinburgh, with a garden behind. There were other small houses and gardens opposite, where the Albany Street churches now stand, and up at the top of the street, opposite the present theatre, there was a row of small weavers' shops, occupied by the Picardy weavers (after whom Picardy Place was called), whose shuttles I used to hear birring along when I went for the shop-keys in the morning. Mr. and Mrs. Fairbairn came to their shop about eleven o'clock, John toddling along, staff in hand, in grayish cloth knee-breeches, stockings and shoes to match, and decent brown coat, his wife by his side, and the maid behind with a basket containing provisions for the day. Small as the shop was, they dined in the back-room, which could not have been more than twelve or fifteen feet square. I have seen the great Archibald Constable, Reid, bookseller in Leith, and

others, dining there; for though the host had not a particle of wit in himself, he was the cause of wit in others. They used to call him Baron Accidents. He was the greatest gourmand I ever knew. Nothing distressed him so much as when two invitations to dinner came for the same day. I have heard him consulting his wife as to which should be accepted; and after going over the viands likely to be at each house, he would choose the one that was likely to give the best fare. He used to screw down the poor men who wrought for him, and made them call again and again for their accounts.

'The accounts of some of the booksellers were kept in the most slovenly way, and long unsettled, and there was something slightly roguish in them, besides confusion. I recollect an account we had for years going on with another bookseller, Dickson, which never could be brought to a settlement, till one day the two, along with little Doig and another, agreed to dine at Luckie Baxter's, who kept a tavern down one of the stairs on the South Bridge, and settle the accounts after dinner over some tumblers of toddy. Seeing they could not balance accounts, each maintaining that books charged had been returned, it was at last agreed that each should give the other a full discharge, without further examination. The only house during my apprenticeship that kept their accounts with accuracy was that of Bell and Bradfute, and they were looked upon by the others as disagreeable strict precisionists.'

Although John Fairbairn was 'one of the most churlish, selfish, unlovable men' Adam Black ever knew, he tells also that there is a tombstone erected to his memory, near the gate of Greyfriars' Churchyard, by his 'disconsolate widow,' who was 'really a good kind of woman,' and has thus enduringly recorded that he was adorned with every human virtue, and, above all, was 'the best of husbands.'

The company Adam had to keep, as his shopmates, was every way distasteful to him. 'Not one of them,' he says, 'made any pretensions to religion or morality.' He adds, however, that the principal clerk, 'Colin,' would, on his return from a 'spree' of three or four days' duration, set himself down at his desk religiously to read his favourite book, *Wotherspoon on Regeneration!* When Colin was missing, it was a time of great discomfort, and he had to be hunted for in all the low dram-shops which he was known to patronise. But the dissipation was not confined to places outside. The warehouse was down a stair on the South Bridge, and when the master was at a safe distance, whisky would be sent for, and disreputable company got from the flat above, and a regular orgy indulged in. 'Perhaps,' says A. B., 'if their vice had been less gross, it would have been more dangerous, but their conduct rather filled me with disgust.'

His reminiscences of the booksellers' shops in Edinburgh during his apprenticeship are interesting

to Edinburgh people. The substance of them was given in a speech at the annual dinner of the Edinburgh Booksellers' Association, where Mr. Black presided.

'When we had to purchase books,' he said, 'for our customers from other shops, I was often sent round the trade to collect them, and as I remember the appearance of every one of them as if it were yesterday, although it is about seventy years ago, I shall notice them in the order in which I called with my collecting list.

'The first I came to was Mackay, on the south side of the High Street, who had one of the largest circulating libraries in Edinburgh, founded by Allan Ramsay. It passed first into the hands of James Sibbald in the Parliament Square, then to Mackay, and lastly, a large portion of it formed the library of William Wilson, George Street.

'A little higher up the High Street I came to James Dickson's, already mentioned. He was a Bailie, and of course a stout supporter of the Government. He had been a juryman on the trial of Muir for sedition in 1793.

'A little farther up the street was Peter Hill, another of the bailies.

'Then passing through the piazza into the Parliament Square, I came to Bell and Bradfute, the best-managed bookselling business in Edinburgh at the time. They dealt principally in law books, and were

remarkable for invariably retaining the same books in their windows for years.[1] I have heard of a gentleman who, after residing for several years in India, wrote to a friend in Edinburgh, to send him out a certain book, of which he would see a copy in Bell and Bradfute's window.

'Next to them came John Ogle, who dealt chiefly in religious books; then Symington, who seemed to have little business; then Sibbald, a man of some literary reputation, who commenced the *Edinburgh Magazine*, afterwards published by Mackay; he also edited four volumes of Scottish poetry, etc.

'Last came Laurie, who was grand secretary, or something, in the Mason Lodge. These were all on the east side of the Parliament Square.

'On the south side was Manners and Miller's shop, the most fashionable in town. Robert Miller was generally cicerone to any distinguished ladies or gentlemen who visited Edinburgh. He was himself an amiable man, with an aldermanic presence, witty, sang a good song, and whistled like a laverock.

'On that side was a passage to the Cowgate, called the Back Stairs, where Mundell and Doig had a wholesale warehouse, afterwards Mundell, Doig, and Stirling.

'Leaving the Parliament Square, I came to William

[1] This respectable old house, now in Bank Street, still preserves much the same characteristics.

Creech, whose shop was at the eastmost end of a block of buildings, afterwards removed, which stood between St. Giles' and the High Street. At that time his shop was managed by John Anderson, who afterwards commenced bookselling in the front of the Exchange, and by John Fairbairn, a very different person from my master, and no relation to him. He afterwards commenced business, in company with John Anderson jun., in the new buildings on the North Bridge.

'Creech's dwelling-house was in Old Assembly Close, where he sometimes invited his friends to breakfast, but never gave dinners. When he was Lord Provost, I recollect seeing a caricature of the kitchens of the Lord Mayor of London and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. In the one was seen a roaring fire, a host of cooks, and roasting and boiling going on in great style. In the other was seen nothing but a gathering-coal on the fire, and a cat keeping itself warm by sitting on the top of it. Creech had some pretensions to literature, and published a volume of essays of some merit.[1] He was the best story-teller I ever heard. It was a great treat to hear him tell the adventures of the

[1] Lord Cockburn says of it (*Memorials*, 1874, p. 148)—'In spite of its absurd title, *Fugitive Pieces*, it is very interesting, and so far as one who knew only one end of the period can judge, generally correct.' Most of the contents originally appeared in the shape of letters to the *Courant*. The first edition was published in 1791, another soon after Creech's death, with a biographical sketch and portrait, in 1815.

Laird of Bonymoon, Dr. Blaikie of Dalkeith, and stories of Hugo Arnot. At the door of his conspicuous shop Creech might often be seen standing with his hands in his pockets, his hair curled and powdered, looking jauntily down the High Street, as if enjoying the view of the Canongate.

'The row of buildings, of which Creech's shop was the eastern terminus, was within six or seven feet of St. Giles' Cathedral. At the west end was the gallows, and under it was the small shop of Robert Ross, who to the trade of bookseller joined that of book auctioneer. He afterwards entered into partnership with Blackwood, under the name of Ross and Blackwood, in a shop on the South Bridge opposite the College.

'From Ross's shop I passed on to Simson's in front of the Exchange, the only one who sold the *Army List*. He was of a crusty temper, and when a bookseller's boy inquired for a list of religious books, answered gruffly, "We keep no such books." Coming down the High Street I came to Constable's, at that time a dingy dark shop, filled with an indifferent stock of old books. He was a jolly, good-looking man, fond of fun, and a frequent visitor at Fairbairn's, whom he, and Reid of Leith, made their regular butt. Constable's clerk was little David Forbes, a crooked, conceited body, who would boast to his companions when *fou*, that 'though they saw his body they did not see his soul.'

'The next shop I came to was Brown's in the south-east corner of the North Bridge, whose trade consisted in atlases and drawing materials. His wife assisted him, and he rose to the rank of bailie. The next was William Laing (father of David Laing), at the head of the Canongate, who dealt only in old books, of which his was the largest and most valuable stock in town. Some years after that, he removed to the South Bridge, to the shop afterwards occupied by Ogle and Murray. On the same side of the South Bridge was Alexander Guthrie, but he dealt chiefly in stationery.

'In Adam Square was Elphinstone Balfour, who seemed to take business very easy.

'The last toward the south was John Guthrie, a very worthy, simple old man, who began the world by making and selling laces; then carried a pack; then kept a stall; and now was master of a respectable shop in Nicolson Street.

'The only booksellers in the New Town were William Whyte in St. Andrew Street, whose principal trade was in music and musical instruments, and Kinnear in South Frederick Street who kept a circulating library. His and Mackay's were the only circulating libraries in town.

'In Leith were Beattie, William Reid, and William Coke. Beattie was little known. Reid had a good deal of jollity, and rejoiced in practical jokes. Coke thought nothing of walking up to Edinburgh to pur-

chase a few catechisms or spelling books for a country customer,[1] and was rather remarkable for an irritable temper. Creech seeing him one hot day washing his head with whisky, said to him, "William, it's no wonder you are hotheaded, since you cool your head with whisky."

'According to Williamson's *Edinburgh Directory* for 1777, there were then twenty booksellers in Edinburgh, and one in Leith. According to the same authority, there were fifty hairdressers and forty-eight barbers, or, as these trades are generally combined, ninety-eight persons who furnished the outside of the head, and twenty-one who furnished the inside. Now happily the numbers are reversed. By the *Edinburgh Directory* for 1867 the booksellers number 128, while the hairdressers are only forty-three. In the latter half of the eighteenth century every gentleman required his hairdresser to dress and powder his head, and to put his wig in order before he went out; and the ladies were not less indebted to these artists for their adornment. It may well be supposed, therefore, that the staff of operators required for ordinary days could hardly meet the multiplied demands for extraordinary occasions; and I have heard of ladies, in order to secure the due frizzling and powdering of their heads for an assembly, having it done the day

[1] It is said in *Kay's Portraits* (vol. ii. p. 43) that he calculated that he had walked twice the circumference of the globe between Edinburgh and Leith.

before, and sitting up all night that it might not be disordered by lying down. I recollect of meeting hairdressers on Sunday mornings flying along the pavement to prepare their customers for going to church.

'If the hairdressers have decreased in numbers, the booksellers have increased in a greater ratio, though many of those who are now dignified with the name of booksellers would not have been acknowledged in my time. Those only were considered as belonging to the trade who dealt in folios, quartos, octavos, and duodecimos, not the mere retailers of penny journals and newspapers. In those days books of any pretensions were frequently published in quarto at a price not less than £2 : 2s. a volume; but alas! we have now fallen upon Liliputian times. Scott's *Lady of the Lake* was originally published at £2 : 2 : 6, and the edition was greedily bought up. Now it is sold for 6d.

'It is remarkable that Allan Ramsay should have combined the trade of hairdresser or wigmaker with that of poet and bookseller. I am proud to think that I am possessed of the shop where Allan manufactured wigs, and composed and sold his ballads. It is one of the few remnants of the picturesque wooden-fronted houses of ancient Edinburgh, on the north side of the High Street, a few yards below the North Bridge.'

During his apprenticeship, especially towards its

close, Adam did not neglect his studies, and often rose in the dark in winter to read or write, sometimes to 'scribble verses.'

In 1802 or 1803 he joined the Gentlemen Volunteers of Edinburgh, and did duty for above a year. He was once sent as one of a picket of 100 men to quell a meal-mob in Nicolson Street. They met in the Parliament house, and were each supplied with a dozen ball-cartridges, and ordered to prime and load before starting. Adam Black thought proper to put plenty priming into the pan but no ball into the barrel of his musket. Fortunately, no firing was called for.

In the last year, 1803, he took advantage of the privilege given to students going for a second year to the same professor, of entering at a reduced fee. He accordingly entered the second Greek class for session 1803-4, and attended very regularly, from 8 to 9 a.m. and 2 to 3 p.m. He now worked in earnest, and got up regularly between four and five in the morning to prepare his lessons. At the close of the session he was agreeably surprised by getting a prize for an essay on History, which he had carried to the class several days before he summoned courage to give it in.

This winter he had chief charge of Fairbairn's business, the head-man having, after dissipating more than usual, gone quite 'to the dogs.' On the last night of 1803 he lay awake in bed waiting to

hear the clock strike twelve, and he says 'at the twelfth stroke my delight was intense to feel that I was now a free man.'

In the interval, after leaving Fairbairn, he was a good deal at the College Library, of which Professor Dalziel was librarian. One day the Professor asked him if he would take a situation as an assistant in Perth Academy. He thanked him, but said he was going to London. 'So near was I,' he says, 'to being a dominie.' About the same time, he says, he had 'some hankerings after the ministry among the Independents;' but these too had to yield to the attractions of the Great Babylon.

On 22d August 1804 he started for London as a passenger in the smack *Swift*, without any security for employment, but with good recommendations to some of the chief London booksellers. After a voyage of seven days, he landed in London and went straight to the house of a friend of his father's, the only person he knew in London. He had suffered from sea-sickness, but was now very hungry, and was rather dismayed to see a breakfast set down for six, of which he could have eaten every morsel.

After breakfast he at once commenced his round of calls with his introductory letters, but with small success. The same answer met him everywhere—'You have come at the very worst season of the year. We shall not require any one till the begin-

ning of winter.' This went on day after day and week after week, till at last his stout heart began to sink. His good father had given him £10 to keep him afloat till he should get employment, and his purse was getting ominously light. The thought of going back to Edinburgh a beaten man was too humiliating. 'No one,' he says, 'who has not experienced it can conceive the desolation of heart of a man without friends or money in London; seeking employment without success, in a tide of active men rushing along the streets full of the important business in which they are engaged. The loneliness of the desert is not half so lonely. I recollect one warm day walking along the City Road, oppressed with weariness and disappointment, going into a grass field and lying down. I fell fast asleep. These fields were then full of herds of cows; now they are a city of streets and squares.'

He was willing to do any honest work by which he could make a living, and inquired in all directions, but in vain. At last he heard of a man called Sheraton, publishing a book called the *Cabinetmaker's Encyclopædia*, who might give him something to do. He called on him, and found the worthy encyclopædist and his surroundings to be painfully humble; but as he wanted an assistant A. B. agreed to help him in whatever way he could, either in writing articles or in a less intellectual capacity. Here is his description of the man and his place:—'He lived in an

obscure street, his house half shop, half dwelling-house, and looked himself like a worn-out Methodist minister, with threadbare black coat. I took tea with them one afternoon. There were a cup and saucer for the host, and another for his wife, and a little porringer for their daughter. The wife's cup and saucer were given to me, and she had to put up with another little porringer. My host seemed a good man, with some talent. He had been a cabinetmaker, was now author and publisher, teacher of drawing, and, I believe, occasional preacher.

'I was with him for about a week, engaged in most wretched work, writing a few articles, and trying to put his shop in order, working among dirt and bugs, for which I was remunerated with half a guinea. Miserable as the pay was, I was half ashamed to take it from the poor man.'

This many-sided worn-out encyclopædist and preacher is an interesting figure, and would have taken the fancy of Dickens. Adam, cogitating upon him in his diary addressed to his parents, says of him further: 'He is a man of talents, and, I believe, of genuine piety. He understands the cabinet business—I believe was bred to it; he has been, and perhaps at present is, a preacher; he is a scholar, writes well; draws, in my opinion, masterly; is an author, bookseller, stationer, and teacher. We may be ready to ask how comes it to pass that a man with such abilities and resources is in such a state?

I believe his abilities and resources are his ruin, in this respect, for by attempting to do everything he does nothing.'[1]

The future publisher of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and friend of Jeffrey and Macaulay, working with this good threadbare man 'among dirt and bugs,' and taking half a guinea for his trouble with some compunction, is an instructive spectacle.

Among the houses to which Black had letters of introduction was that of Lackington, Allen, and Co. He had so little desire to be taken there that he left it to the last, and was told to call again. He was not favourably impressed by the establishment. It was named 'The Temple of the Muses,' and over the door was the inscription

LACKINGTON, ALLEN, & CO.

THE CHEAPEST BOOKSELLERS IN THE WORLD,

which a small bookseller on the opposite side of the street fairly parodied by calling himself

GREENLAND, THE CHEAPEST BOOKSELLER IN FINSBURY.

The Temple of the Muses was a large building of five stories, filled chiefly with old books to the number of 80,000. The lower shop was of such extent that a

[1] Sheraton, now regarded, along with Chippendale, as one of the old masters of British Upholstery, died in 1806, aged 55, having reaped none of the fruits of the skill and taste for which his designs are now regarded with superstitious admiration.

coach and four was once driven round the counters, and above it were four circular galleries lighted from the roof. Strangers often came to see this as one of the sights of London.

Here, after calling two or three times, he at last got employment at 18s. a week, which he joyfully accepted; and here he remained for nearly three years. It required rigid economy to maintain himself respectably at first, but he did it. War prices prevailed at this time; the quartern loaf was 1s., and rose to 1s. 4d. Butcher meat was quite out of the question; but he could live and be content without it. 'Very often,' he says, 'my dinner consisted of two slices of my loaf and a drink of water, with sometimes a dessert of apples. I read and dined at the same time, and felt quite happy in my independence, with my 18s. a week. I never was in better health, and went respectably dressed, and with money in my pocket.'

For the first year he kept a diary very regularly, which he transmitted to his parents from time to time, by friends going from London to Edinburgh. In thought and style it is creditable to a youth of twenty, kept hard at work from seven in the morning till nine at night, with intervals for meals.

During his first fortnight in London he lived with a Mr. Dalziel from Edinburgh, where he paid about 17s. a week for board and lodgings. After

this he lodged for ten days with Mr. Ogle, bookseller, another Edinburgh man, who charged him nothing for his bed. He now looked out for quarters near the Temple of the Muses, where his friend, Walter Drysdale, who worked with a watchmaker near Finsbury, found him lodgings near the chapel called the Tabernacle, kept by a Mrs. Westfield, whom he found 'one of the kindest, worthiest old ladies' he ever knew. Here he paid 2s. 6d. a week for a room, 'if room it could be called, eight feet long, and not quite so broad. The bed when folded down almost entirely covered the floor. There was just room besides for my chest and a chair. There was a small window, which opened by hinges, but no fireplace. When the bed was folded, my books and writing-materials were arranged on the top of it. My bread and butter and water, and other odds and ends, had to find room there also. I had no table, but made my chest do duty for it.' Here he lived for about a year.

Of public amusements and the sights of London he necessarily saw little. He went once to the theatre, and tells what he saw, though he omits to mention what the play was, or who were the chief performers. The theatre was Drury Lane, the night 6th December 1804. The Royal Family were to be present, and he found a great crowd round the doors at five o'clock. When he got inside he heard shrieks, and looking about he saw a man and

woman being trampled under foot. He pulled them up, one after the other, the crowd being fortunately brought to a stand for a little, and then passed in. He then describes the scene: 'Near seven o'clock His Majesty entered, and was received with repeated bursts of applause. The band played "God Save the King," the audience stamped with their feet, clapped their hands, and huzzaed lustily. You may conceive what sort of melody would be produced. All this time His Majesty, the Queen, and the Princesses, who accompanied them, stood and bowed and curtsied to the audience. The King is very like his picture, a jolly, honest-looking man, dressed in regimentals. He used a sort of short prospect (opera) glass. The Queen is a very decent-looking woman, dresses plain, and she is a great snuffer. The Princesses wore richer dresses than the Queen. They had all their Lords and Ladies-in-waiting behind them. The Ladies-in-waiting wore hoops. Beneath the King's box stood two of the Tower officers, with great old-fashioned spears. I saw likewise one of the Princes. We were not dismissed till about twelve o'clock. I was completely tired.'

What he lacked of secular entertainments during the week, he made up for on Sunday by unwearied attendance at church, seldom less than three times a day, sometimes more. Before he left Edinburgh he had, along with his parents, become a member of the Rev. John Aikman's church, and in London he joined

the church meeting in Fetter Lane, under the Rev. Mr. Burder, one of the Independent ministers, who succeeded Rowland Hill in the Circus. From the regular services of this church he was never absent, but he occasionally went in addition to other places of worship to hear eminent men. Sunday was his only free day, and this was the use he made of it. To dine out on that day, or even walk in the parks, he would not hear of. He got quite beyond this severe Sabbatarianism in his mellower years, but though as a young man he must have been considered a strait-laced Puritan among his London friends, he was in the end none the worse of it. Of his joining the church as a professed member he says, 'I found that this step gave a stability to my character, and proved a defence from follies and vices, especially as a young man in London, entirely my own master, with no one to guide or check me.' Respect for the teaching and feelings of one's parents, when they are really believed in, and worthy of respect, is one of the purest and best of motives. Joined to it, and overruling it, was a solemn though unpretending realisation of his constant amenableness to the will of his Heavenly Father, and his constant protection by that highest power. This continued to be his dominant principle to the last, expressed very little in words, but so far as he could, in conduct.

Among other preachers whom he went to hear was

John Newton of 'Cardiphonia,' Cowper's friend, who was then very old, in his 80th year. He says: 'As I went into the church I was surprised to see a livery servant in a brown coat with yellow collar leaning over the crimson velvet cushion of the pulpit. This was Newton's servant, whom he brought into the pulpit to look up the place in the Bible or Prayer-book for him, and to remind him of the hour. It was obvious his memory had much failed. In his sermon he seemed just to be talking to his people. He began by, "I remember once preaching on a text not dissimilar to this;" then rubbing his forehead once or twice, he composedly said, "I have forgot it at this moment," and then went on. While he was preaching his servant said something to him, telling him the hour, I suppose, when he turned about, and inquired, "What said you, Thomas? Is it past it?" and then went on again.'

He entered the Lackington house on 24th September 1804, and at Christmas his wages were raised to a guinea. In the course of the next year they were increased to a guinea and a half per week, and he was promoted to the *Lounge*, a well-furnished room, where the finest and rarest books were kept, and the best customers shown to. His predecessor in this post was Mr. Hessey, who left it to become a partner in the firm of Taylor and Hessey.

After a year's close attention to business he was allowed a fortnight's holiday in September 1805, and

chose to visit Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. At Portsmouth he took a boat for Spithead and sailed round the *Victory*, the finest ship he ever saw. They were not allowed on board, as the ship was preparing for the admiral's last cruise, on which he started soon after, to win his last fight at Trafalgar. He got an introduction to see the dockyard and building yards at Portsmouth, which greatly impressed him. Among other sights there was the body hanging in chains of 'Jack the Painter,' who had set fire to the ropeworks during the American War. After seeing the Isle of Wight he did a little business at Southampton, visited Netley Abbey, and returned to London by coach on Saturday evening, glad to get back to his little room, to be in his place in Mr. Burder's chapel next day, and in the *Lounge* on Monday morning.

Soon after this he had to change his lodgings, his landlady having become so old and frail that she had to give up housekeeping. He pays a grateful tribute to the virtues of good old Mrs. Westfield :—

'She was as kind and attentive to me as a mother, and was a fine specimen of the true Englishwoman of the yeoman class. Her information was scanty, but she was a sound churchwoman, knew all the fast and feast days, had her goose and plum-pudding at Christmas, her pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, and though a firm believer in the Litany, she liked very well to hear me read some of the writings of Dis-

senters. She was kind to all, just and true as steel, and would stoop to nothing dishonourable. She knew little about Christian doctrine, but without knowing it she possessed the Christian virtues in no ordinary degree.'

His knowledge of Latin and Greek had been found useful in the Temple of the Muses, and had won him additional respect as well as promotion. He now set himself to learn French with a French priest, M. Lemettais, at the rate of a guinea for twelve lessons, and made good progress. His master made him talk French as soon as possible, and did not grudge his time to his vigorous pupil, though by his own admission the astute young Scot took a little advantage of the national sensibilities of his teacher, by starting subjects of discussion on which he felt keenly (Buonaparte, etc.), and would go on talking long after the stipulated hour had expired.

In the summer of 1806 he paid a visit to Edinburgh, going by coach rather than encounter again the horrors of sea-sickness. His original intention was to walk all the way, and he carefully consulted *Moore's Almanack* for the time when 'a tract of fair weather' was to be expected. 'The predictions in Moore,' he says, 'were believed in as firmly as Holy Writ by the old women in England.' He had the kind offer of a seat in his gig from John Loudon, the horticulturist, who was starting on a journey to the north of England, but was dissuaded from it

by a friend who had some interest in a coach, and got him an outside seat, with liberty to go inside when he liked. He afterwards regretted that he had not availed himself of Loudon's offer, through which he would have seen so much more of English scenery and rural life.

After staying some days in Edinburgh, where the things that struck him most, after an absence of about two years, were the peculiar tone of the native speech, which he had never observed before, and the shortness of the distances, compared with London, he paid a visit to his brother Francis at Dollar, who was engaged in building operations there, and had recently married.[1] He also visited his good old friend Mr. David Wanliss at Abernethy, riding across the country on horseback, which was a novelty to him. Of Mr. Wanliss he says :—

'Mr. Wanliss was a remarkable man, and had collected a considerable library of excellent books, especially in theology. I doubt if its equal was to be found within the bounds of the presbytery. Though a staunch Presbyterian, he was liberal in his views beyond most. He was a man of sound common sense and sterling honesty, and an industrious and successful farmer. He came frequently to Edinburgh for the benefit of St. Bernard's Well, and

[1] His wife was widow of a Mr. Ramage, by whom she had a son, Crawfurd Tait Ramage, afterwards distinguished as a teacher and scholar, and headmaster of Closeburn Institution.

my father got acquainted with him on one of these visits. He wore a large blue bonnet—I should think three feet in circumference. On one occasion he had a strong desire to see a play, and though he had great religious scruples about going to a theatre, his curiosity got the better of them. He got a front seat in the two-shilling gallery, and placed his bonnet flat before him. Whether by accident or by the help of one of his neighbours, it fell down into the pit between the acts, to the no small amusement of the audience. One picked it up and threw it to another, a third put it on his head, a fourth twirled it round on the top of his stick. Mr. Wanliss began to be alarmed for his bonnet, but good-humouredly addressing the performers in the pit said, "Gentlemen, I'm glad to see that my bonnet affords ye ony amusement, but when ye're dune wi't I'll thank ye to hand it up."'

About this time his friend Ogle proposed that Black should enter into partnership with him and Duncan in Paternoster Row. The offer was declined, though a good one, and as soon as he had recovered from an attack of scarlet fever, caught at Dollar or Abernethy, he returned to his work at the Temple of the Muses, where he continued for a few months longer.

The time now drew near when he must commence business on his own account. He would have preferred to settle in London, but his friends at home

were so desirous that he should remain in Edinburgh that he decided on doing so. The shop No. 57 South Bridge was taken for him, and he entered it at Whitsunday 1807, being then just over twenty-three years of age.

CHAPTER II.

1807-1831.

ADAM BLACK commenced business on a very modest scale. He had no capital of his own, but on the strength of a loan of £200 from Mr. Wanliss, and a cash-credit for £300, for which his father and another friend were securities, he stocked his shop, and cheerfully took his place in the battle of life. There is nothing formidable nowadays in entering on business, except financial considerations. No rational person thinks of inquiring as to the political or religious creed of a shopkeeper before dealing with him. It was not so in 1807. To be known as one of the 'dangerous class' who sympathised with the 'Friends of the People,' and of those who added to their sin by forsaking the Church of their Fathers for a miserable set of Independents, was the worst certificate a man could have who desired at that time to 'get on' in Edinburgh. Adam Black knew this well, but it rather stimulated than depressed him. He was neither afraid to express his opinions nor forward to

do so. He knew perfectly well that the religious body he was connected with could be of little use to him in business, and that he had no patronage to expect from the ruling class or their followers. He knew that not many years ago (1793), a friend of his, Walter Berry, also a bookseller on the South Bridge, had been imprisoned for six months in the Tolbooth for publishing a 'seditious pamphlet' denouncing the extravagant wars in which the Governments of the country had involved it since 1688. But neither financially nor otherwise did he feel special anxiety. 'I lived,' he says, 'in my father's house; my expenses were very moderate, and my only assistant was an apprentice, who received £10 a year. Though seemingly very dependent, I was really independent. I could maintain my opinions on religion and politics without fear of losing the favour of any who could or would help me on. I could say with the miller on the river Dee :—

"I care for nobody, for nobody cares for me."'

As an illustration, however, of the terrorism that prevailed, he confesses that it so far influenced him, that if a stranger came into the shop and found him reading Cobbett's *Political Register*, he carefully put it out of sight. Such was the state of public feeling in Edinburgh when Adam Black commenced business. To be suspected of disloyalty, or what was considered the same thing, a desire to reform public

abuses, was dangerous to the prospects of a tradesman. Many were afraid of their credit at the banks being affected by such a suspicion, and naturally preferred to go with the tide than go against it.

Adam Black's shop, however, was regularly visited by a few very respectable persons, to whom he could speak freely on political subjects. Among these were John Ramsay M'Culloch, Dr. Irving of the Advocates' Library, Jeffrey, Cockburn, and some others of the small but powerful band of Parliament House Whigs would also look in upon him occasionally. The most frequent visitor of that set was James Gibson, W.S., afterwards Sir J. Gibson-Craig, who by and by came to regard Adam Black as the most forcible and trusty representative of Whig principles among the commercial class of Edinburgh. Whenever any special movement was afoot, he was usually the first man consulted outside of the Parliament House. It is said that on one occasion, some time after this period, when Gibson had been trying to stir up the citizens to some vigorous action, he declared in disgust that he had 'gone all over the Bridges and found nothing but skim-milk—all except Adam Black.'

Mr. Black, however, did not take any prominent part in public matters for ten years after entering on business. There was no opportunity for doing so. The bulk of the population was totally unrepresented in Parliament or even in the Town Council, which

elected itself and the M.P. for Edinburgh also. Public meetings had not yet come into existence; the press was of no importance; and the public, however much it thought and felt on political questions, was practically dumb.

Young men of active minds found scope for their abilities in other spheres. A Sabbath-school Society had been formed in Edinburgh about this time, of which he became a member. Its chief promoters were Dissenters, and were generally regarded by the Established clergy in the same light as those who were not sound in the political faith of the time, as dangerous persons, meddling with things that did not belong to them, probably sowing the seeds of mischievous doctrines among the young. A sketch in *Kay's Portraits* represents one of the Edinburgh clergy entering a Sabbath school, and dismissing it—cane uplifted—with every sign of rage.

The Sabbath-school Society met monthly, to hear the reports of those appointed to visit the schools and manage the affairs of the Society. They sometimes had animated discussions, prolonged till late hours, which proved a good training for those of the members who afterwards took part in public affairs.

Adam Black took charge of a Sabbath school in Fountainbridge to begin with, but gave it up after a while, the attendance being poor, and some of the boys extremely rude and unmanageable. Portobello

was the next field of his efforts, at that time 'a small village.' Assisted by Mr. Lothian, father of Maurice Lothian, afterwards brother-in-law of Mr. Black, he called at every house in the place to recruit scholars, and soon opened school with about a hundred children. Mr. Black took sole charge of the school, and worked it with remarkable success for several years, going down to Portobello every Sunday evening, summer and winter, in weather fair or foul. 'This is the part of my life,' he says, 'that I look back upon with the greatest satisfaction. If I have been of any use to my fellow-creatures, it was here.'

In 1809 or 1810 Mr. Black entered on a somewhat hazardous enterprise with an old shopmate, Thomas Underwood, in whom he had taken a special interest when they were together at old Fairbairn's, acting as elder brother and private tutor to him. Underwood had gone up to London, and got employment as shopman to John Murray. The business of a bookseller named Grace came into the market, and Underwood, considering it a 'grand opening,' asked Black to join him in buying it. He had friends in Edinburgh who could assist, if they would. Black called on these friends, but they scouted the idea. The only resource was to ask his father to lend the money, which he kindly did, stipulating, however, that he was to have a share of the profits, which was fixed at a third. The business prospered well; but at the end of three years the Edinburgh partners were

startled by a letter from Underwood, objecting to the continuance of the partnership, on the ground that the Black share of the profits was too large. 'I cannot express,' says Mr. Black, 'how keenly I felt this cruel wrench of friendship. The difference was made up by my father restricting his share to £200 a-year, but the entire confidence in my friend was gone.'

The partnership went on for another year, when a still grander 'opening' occurred. Murray had set up the *Quarterly Review*, and was removing from Fleet Street to Albemarle Street. He proposed that Underwood and Black should buy his Fleet Street business for £3000. Underwood, believing this to be an extraordinary bargain, the like of which would never happen again, wrote to Black; but, without waiting to hear from him, agreed to purchase Murray's whole stock, his copyrights of medical books, then his chief business, and his lease of the premises, at the price asked, and to give bills for the whole, payable at certain terms. Adam Black was horrified on hearing of this grand performance, knowing that between them they could not possibly raise funds sufficient to meet the bills when due. He declined to concur in the arrangement, but Underwood had committed himself and his partner, and Murray would not consent to drop the agreement, having come under engagements for the property in Albemarle Street. Black and Underwood then tried to get others to join in the undertaking, but failed.

Neither Longman nor Constable would look at the thing. As a last resource, Black proposed to his brother Charles, who was a partner in their father's business, and had already made some money, to drop the building trade and join him and Underwood in bookselling. Charles agreed to do so, and to advance £1000, and his father gave some additional security. Charles went up to London to take part in the business, and the firm of UNDERWOOD AND BLACKS now took the place of JOHN MURRAY in Fleet Street. Adam Black took the precaution this time to have their agreement in writing; but Underwood's surprises were not yet exhausted. At the end of a year, when it was proposed to have a more formal deed of partnership drawn up, he insisted that the money contributed by Charles should be more than double what had been agreed on. This was too much for Adam Black, and he quitted the business as soon as possible. Underwood found means to buy both brothers out; and 'I had greatly more pleasure,' says Mr. Black, 'in getting out than I had in getting in.' This was in 1813.

He had long wished to visit Paris, and in the summer of 1816 went over with three pleasant companions, David Laing, David Brown, both at that time booksellers, and James Wilson, brother of Professor John Wilson (better known as 'Christopher North'), a distinguished naturalist, and a delightful man. They sailed from Leith to Rotterdam, and after

visiting the chief towns of Holland and Belgium, went on to Paris. When at Brussels they visited Waterloo and Quatre Bras, where they found the wheat in the ear, and large patches of a deeper green, where twelve months before the slain had been buried in thousands. A short residence in Paris corrected Mr. Black's British prejudices against the French. He says, 'I found them generally well-conducted, honourable, and very agreeable.' He liked Paris so well that he revisited it in 1818, and in subsequent years as often as he was able. On this occasion he made the acquaintance of several good friends in the way of business. One of these was M. Merlin, a pleasant gentleman of the old school. Some years after this, Mr. James Gibson-Craig when in Merlin's shop mentioned that he lived in Edinburgh. 'Connaissez vous Mons. Black?' said the old gentleman. 'Oh oui.' 'C'est un brave garçon,' said Merlin.

After about six weeks' absence Black and Laing left Paris together, leaving James Wilson at the Jardin des Plantes, where he spent most of his time. Black and Laing had spent theirs chiefly in bookshops and on the Quais, where they secured many valuable books in beautiful old bindings, remains of the noble libraries of princes and aristocrats, confiscated during the great Revolution. David Laing as usual carried away also a quantity of prints. Curiously enough he was the hero of the only adventure that befell them in Paris. 'He never liked to hear me mention

it,' says Black, 'but he had no reason to be ashamed of himself.' One Sunday evening they had been walking together in the Champs Elysées, and came to the gates of the Tuileries just as they were being shut. Black got through, but Laing was locked in, and had to go round a little to get out. Black walked on to the hotel, and wondered what was keeping his friend. Presently, however, Laing returned, with a flushed face, and a scratch on his cheek. The explanation was, that after the gates were closed, he heard the National Guardsmen jabbering to each other, and the word 'boxy' repeated. He turned to look at them, when one of the valiant Gauls came up and gave him a whack on the side of the head, knocking off his hat. Fortunately David had learned at the High School how to use his fists, and he now did so. 'We continued sparring,' he said, 'till some women came up and separated us—neither, I dare say, very loath.' This practical illustration of the grand Scottish motto, 'Nemo me impune lacesset,' on the part of one of the most peaceable of men and greatest of Scottish archæologists, is delightful.

On their return home they had, as sometimes happens even to prudent Scotchmen, reserved just enough of money to pay their travelling expenses. At Margate Laing had to pay much more duty on his prints than he anticipated, and borrowed from Black, which left between them enough to pay for dinner, with one shilling over. The landlady took places

for them on the coach, to be paid in London, which she said was often done, and they started in glee. At Canterbury they spent their last shilling on a cup of tea. About midnight they arrived at Rochester, where the coach proprietor, 'a stout imperious John Bull,' insisted that they must pay their fares before going any farther. In this emergency David Laing called to mind that he had some coins in his trunk, which he had collected in Paris, and he dug them out. With some grumbling, they were taken for what they were worth, and the deficit that still had to be made up was kindly lent by a fellow-passenger.

The year 1817 was memorable for Edinburgh as that which saw the birth of the two chief organs of public opinion it has produced after the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Scotsman* and *Blackwood's Magazine*. Each was hailed by the party it represented as a refreshing novelty and a wholesome power, denounced by the opposite side as an engine of mischief and an offence to all the right-minded. The struggle between the dominant but waning, and the young but growing powers, was gradually reaching a crisis, and the passions of the combatants became more intense as it drew near. The bitterness of animosity displayed in those days, not merely in political but in literary life, is repulsive now to look back on, and difficult to realise. Libels and actions of damages, whippings, canings, duels and homicides, were quite the order of the day. No impartial person who studies the un-

pleasant history of that time can fail to see that the party represented by *Blackwood's Magazine* were most to blame. They had more wit on their side, but also more venom. The history of the *Beacon* and *Sentinel* newspapers, both set up in vain opposition to the *Scotsman*, is a chronicle of futile malignity. The good Sir Walter, who was tempted into giving his support to the *Beacon*, said, when it came to a disgraceful end, 'I never was so sick of a transaction in my life.'

Mr. Black says of this period—'The state of public feeling in Edinburgh at that time cannot be conceived by the readers of *Blackwood* of the present day. The most opprobrious names were applied to their opponents. M'Culloch was the *Galloway Stot;* Constable, *The Crafty;* Stuart of Dunearn, the *Dunearn Ox*, etc. Wilson, though the reputed editor, had little control over the magazine, and Blackwood himself rather rejoiced in the mischief. As might have been expected, this party warfare, in which no quarter was given, had a baneful influence upon Edinburgh society, and especially on the book trade. I recollect a bookseller's sale, at which a number of the trade were assembled, when Constable came in late. Seeing Blackwood, he pointed to him, and said, "I cannot associate with that man," and immediately left the room, followed by several others. I remained, though friendly to Constable, not choosing to act as an adherent of either party. But it

was not easy to maintain a position of neutrality between two proud and hot-tempered men.'

Of the *Scotsman* he says—'In the beginning of this year the *Scotsman* newspaper was started, and was hailed by the majority of the people as a deliverance from the slavish sycophancy of the other newspapers. I was acquainted with its originators, J. R. M'Culloch, its first editor; Charles Maclaren, then a clerk in the custom-house, its next editor; William Ritchie, a solicitor; and John Robertson, bookseller. . . .

'From Mr. M'Culloch I had a visit almost daily. He entered keenly into the political contests of the time, and came down on his opponents like a sledge hammer. Although he did not hesitate to censure others very severely, he was excessively sensitive to attacks upon himself. He was of a very friendly disposition, and a genial companion. In London, after he became Controller of the Stationery Office, I received much kindness from him.

'Of Charles Maclaren I had a high opinion. He was a sterling honest man, amiable in his disposition, fair and courteous to all. Though not University bred, he was a scholar and a man of science. He wrote the best book on the site of Troy, and some treatises on geology. His style was pure and simple Saxon.

'William Ritchie, the brother of the now (1862) sole proprietor of the *Scotsman*, John Ritchie, was of

a warmer temperament, an ardent Liberal politician, thoroughly honest, but more likely to bring the paper into trouble than any of the others.

'John Robertson, brother of Alexander the music-seller, was a bold and honest Liberal, but a little testy. I afterwards acted with him in the Town Council, and we were always on the same side.'

The year 1817 was still more memorable to Adam Black as the year of his marriage, and of his first appearance in public. When his parents took up house in Charles Street, two young masons lodged with them, one of whom, James Tait, afterwards rose to great respectability as a builder. He was also fond of books, and often called at Adam Black's shop. One day in 1813 he consulted him about his youngest son Charles, whom he was about to send to an apprenticeship. Black recommended bookselling, and offered to take the youth, which was at once agreed to. This led to his occasionally visiting Mr. Tait's house in Maitland Street. The only daughter, Isabella, was twelve years younger than Adam Black, and he looked upon her at first 'just as a very pretty girl.' In the course of his visits he found out that she had charms of price far above beauty. An attractive combination of sweetness and discretion specially drew him to her; 'and there was about her,' he says, 'that natural simplicity which made me think if I could only secure her affections that she would make me a good wife.' In that he suc-

ceeded, and on 4th June 1817, the King's birthday—snow falling during the day—they were married by the venerable Dr. David Dickson of the West Kirk. People of the most diverse character are often the most happily matched. There could not be a more pleasing example of the union of force and gentleness than Mr. and Mrs. Adam Black. 'Through the kind providence of God,' he says, 'we have now lived in union for half a century, in the enjoyment of more happiness and love than falls to the lot of most husbands and wives.'

Towards the close of this year Mr. Black showed himself for the first time in the Edinburgh arena of politics, in which for the next fifty years he was a very prominent figure. The question of Burgh Reform had been much agitated some years before in all the Scottish burghs, but the contest was found so fruitless and discouraging that for a time it was entirely given up. It was even considered discreditable by the arm-chair politicians of the time to annoy the public with agitation on the subject. Adam Black was not of that opinion, and he was probably stimulated to action by the bracing utterances of the *Scotsman*. He thought the question ought again to be revived, and that the best platform for doing so would be that of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh, which has always shown a spirited interest in public questions affecting the welfare of the community. He consulted with Andrew Scott, Peter Brown, and a

few other trusty reformers, and a series of resolutions prepared by him were approved of. The word 'Reform' was so obnoxious to timid ears that it was thought wise to avoid it, and instead of 'Burgh Reform' the thing was called 'Improvement in Burgh Polity.' Some time before this the burgesses of Montrose had raised an action in the Court of Session, to have the last election of magistrates in the burgh reduced, on account of some informalities. In this they were successful; and the Privy Council ordered a new election to be made by the burgesses at large, thus liberating them from the domination of the self-elected junto who had hitherto held the election in their own hands. This was some encouragement to the Burgh Reformers, but Mr. Black had very little hope of carrying the Merchant Company with him at once. The city authorities were dead against any alteration of the existing order of things, and denounced it as dangerous. The clergy generally opposed it, as but another form of that 'unhappy tendency' to revolt against 'time-honoured institutions,' which is always one of their favourite 'bogies,' and exhorted their patient flocks to 'meddle not with them that are given to change.' The bankers looked on the movement with disfavour, as tending to disturb the current of business. The upper classes generally, and those who hung by their skirts, regarded all such agitation with disgust. 'Who could tell where it would all end?' Some even of those

who were convinced of the need of reform were afraid to mix themselves up with men who were under the stigma of being Radicals, Dissenters, firebrands, etc.

In such circumstances, Adam Black rose up in a crowded meeting of the Merchant Company to move his resolutions. A more timid man might have felt uneasy under the unsympathetic eyes of potent, grave, and reverend Seigniors of the city, to some of whom his years and position as a merchant seemed to make silence among his elders more becoming than speech. While he was in the act of rising, a respectable old Tory who sat behind him laid his hand on his shoulder, with the advice, 'Sit down, man; ye're ower young to speak!' He rose nevertheless, and moved the following resolutions:—

'I. That this Company views with great satisfaction the exertions now making to introduce into the Scotch burghs a more rational and liberal system of town polity, and considers the sound and enlightened principles displayed in the Set[1] of Montrose, so congenial to the British Constitution, as reflecting the highest honour on the Lord Advocate of Scotland, and His Majesty's Privy Council, and eminently conducive to the welfare of the community and the respectability of the magistracy.

'II. That this Company, being deeply interested in everything connected with the good of the city,

[1] The word 'Set' is the technical phrase in Scotland for the system of municipal election followed in burghs.

and being the only chartered body of merchant-burgesses, consider themselves particularly called upon to use every exertion to procure for the burgesses that influence in the administration of their own affairs to which they are entitled, and to promote such improvements in the Set of the city as will be conducive to its prosperity.'

These resolutions were seconded by Archibald Anderson, of the firm of Brown and Anderson, merchants. Anderson was a moderate Liberal, Brown a Tory. James Spittal, afterwards Provost, and Andrew Scott, supported the resolutions. Counter resolutions were proposed by the Master and Assistant Masters of the Company, seconded by Samuel Anderson of Moredun. To the surprise of all, and not least of Adam Black himself, his resolutions were carried by a majority of two to one—176 to 87. When he had to name a committee to carry out the resolutions, he had great difficulty in making up a list, not being well acquainted with many of the members of the Company.

The question of Burgh Reform was now kept alive with vigour for some time. Frequent meetings were held, and it was finally agreed that an action should be raised in the Court of Session to have it declared that through certain informalities the last election of the Magistrates in Edinburgh was illegal, in which case the 'Set' of the burgh would have been broken through, and it was expected that a popular election by the burgesses would be ordered.

This action, at the instance of the Committee of the Merchant Company and committees of the other incorporations, was commenced on 29th November 1817. The pursuers were assured that being a 'summary process' it would very soon be decided; but the glorious delays which the 'forms of process' allowed in those days were taken advantage of to the full extent by the Magistrates, who were defending themselves at the public expense, and the 'summary' process went on prosperously till 1821, when it was compromised, the defenders paying £1100 of expenses to the pursuers. What mainly induced the Reformers to agree to this was the result of a case similar to theirs in Aberdeen, which took place in the course of their action. In that case the Privy Council, instead of ordering a new election by the burgesses, as they had done in Montrose, restored the old Magistrates; and if this were to be the result of a judgment finding the Edinburgh election illegal, the reformers would have lost all their pains. Their expenses would have amounted to thousands of pounds, if all the eminent counsel on their side, Clerk, Cockburn, Cranstoun, Jeffrey, Murray, Thomson,[1] etc., had not given their services gratuitously. As it was, the

[1] Lord Cockburn says, 'It is impossible to think of Burgh Reform without remembering Archibald Fletcher, advocate, its stoutest and most indefatigable champion. He gave his whole energies to it in the dawn of its agitation; and its revival, after a thirty years' slumber, though it found his body old and infirm, found no abatement of his spirit.'

£1100 were not sufficient. Several years after the action was brought to a close, the agent for the pursuers presented a bill for a balance of about £500 to Mr. Black. Fortunately, he had, at an earlier stage of the proceedings, got the members of the various committees to sign an obligation each to pay his share of the expenses to be incurred; and he succeeded, not without trouble, in getting this unpleasant balance settled.

In the meantime, to the astonishment of all parties, Lord Archibald Hamilton, the earnest and able advocate of reform, carried a motion in the House of Commons for a Committee to inquire into the Scottish Burgh System, by a majority of 149 to 144. Adam Black was summoned as a witness, along with James Spittal (afterwards Sir James), Charles Baxter, and Francis Howden, and they arrived in London before the Lord Provost and other witnesses on the municipal side. 'As first comers,' he says, 'besides being in the position of accusers, we assumed somewhat of superiority over the Town Council men, who were the parties on their trial. We met in the same room, but on very different terms from those on which we stood to each other in Edinburgh. We were no longer the despised turbulent agitators, who were not thought entitled to receive any satisfactory information from the Magistrates; while they felt humbled at being obliged to answer any questions put by our friends in the Committee, and to disclose

what they fain would have concealed, the bankrupt state of their affairs.' Notwithstanding the proof resulting from the inquiry of the Committee, that three other burghs besides Edinburgh were bankrupt, and that this was due to municipal abuse and mismanagement, the Government took no further steps in the matter, and the hopes of the reformers were for the present disappointed. The result naturally was to intensify the public dissatisfaction, and make the overthrow of the existing system the more complete and ignominious when it came. The general discontent throughout the country and the eagerness for reform waxed more and more deep and determined as the Government and their supporters showed themselves more resolved to curb and repress. The year 1820 was distinguished by many exciting events, and the tide of Toryism had reached the point where it was inevitable that it should begin to ebb. George III. died on the 29th of January; but the hopes of change for the better after the accession of George IV. were soon proved to be delusive. Conspiracies and plots were rife, the usual results of reckless despair. London was agitated by the Cato Street conspiracy, Glasgow and the west of Scotland by the Bonnymuir insurrection. The one was essentially truculent and murderous in its intent; the other had some better elements, and its end, though sad enough, was not without farcical features. The chief ostensible actors were a few misguided weavers, instigated

to what they believed to be heroic efforts by spies of ineffable baseness. Of this period Thomas Carlyle says, in his *Reminiscences* (i. 52),—'A time of great rages and absurd terrors and expectations, a very fierce Radical and anti-Radical time. Edinburgh endlessly agitated by it all around me, not to mention Glasgow in the distance. Gentry people full of zeal and foolish terror and fury, and looking disgustingly busy and important. . . . The mass of the people, not the populace alone, had a quite different feeling, as if the danger from those west country Radicals was small or imaginary, and their grievances dreadfully real; which was with emphasis my own private notion of it.'

A small military force quickly dispersed the poor weavers, who rose in arms at Bonnymuir, and most of them were made prisoners. Several were condemned to various terms of imprisonment, but three unhappy ringleaders were sentenced to death, and had the honour of being *beheaded*, after being first hanged, two at Stirling, and one at Glasgow. 'They were all guilty of treason, no doubt,' says Lord Cockburn, 'as any old woman is who chooses to charge a regiment of cavalry. But to make such a parade about such treason did no good either to the law or to the people.'

Up to this time the citizens of Edinburgh had found no outlet for their political sentiments beyond the walls of the Merchant Company and the columns

of the *Scotsman.* A public meeting on any political question had never been held in the city. It was determined at last to break this insufferable silence, and the 'Parliament House' was the natural centre from which the movement originated. The 'Whig clique' did it, that formidable little phalanx of lawyers, so nicknamed by the Tories of the time. The 'Whig clique' of later days,—such are the changes that time brings,—has been chiefly assailed and denounced by the 'Advanced Liberals' or 'Citizen Party' of Edinburgh, to whom a mere old Whig was little better, if not, indeed, more offensive, than a modern Conservative. In 1820 Mr. James Gibson, W.S., was the leader of the 'Advanced Liberals' of Edinburgh, and he came, as usual, to Adam Black, to ask what he thought of a public meeting to petition the King to dismiss his ministers, and whether he thought the Parliament House Whigs would be fairly supported in such a demonstration by the mercantile community. Black assured him that, from all he knew of the general feeling, they would be well supported. The meeting was accordingly resolved on, and Adam Black was not idle in his part of the arrangements. It took place on 16th December 1820 in the Pantheon, the largest covered meeting-place in Edinburgh, built by Stephen Kemble in 1792, which afterwards became 'Corri's Rooms,' 'The Pantheon,' the 'Caledonian Theatre,' the 'Adelphi.' It was at that time a circus, and on this occa-

sion it was crammed by an enthusiastic audience. Mr. Black, writing fifty years after it, says the enthusiasm was such as he had 'never since seen equalled — it was refreshing and elevating.' The chairman was James Moncreiff, afterwards Lord Moncreiff, father of the present (1885) Lord Moncreiff, and the other speakers were Jeffrey, Horner (father of Francis and Leonard), Cockburn, Murray (afterwards Lord Murray), Gibson, Clerk, and J. P. Grant of Rothiemurchus, all Parliament House men. The motion to petition for dismissal of the Ministry was opposed by only one dissentient voice, that of a Mr. Aiton, an apothecary, who made an absurd and offensive speech, for which he was obliged to apologise, but for castigation of which the *Scotsman*, being prosecuted for 'libel,' had afterwards to pay £100 of damages.

The petition, which only adult males were allowed to sign, received 17,363 signatures. Mr. Black had charge of a copy in Nicolson Street, and recollected Cockburn's telling them for any sake to close the petition, or they would get more signatures than there were inhabitants in Edinburgh! He calculated that there were at that time not more than 20,000 adult males in the city. An opposition petition, got up by the magistrates, received, after the most strenuous efforts, from 1600 to 1700 signatures. 'I date,' says Mr. Black, 'the complete emancipation of the citizens of Edinburgh from political thraldom from the Pan-

theon meeting.' 'The unexampled spectacle was exhibited,' says Lord Cockburn, 'of a large Scottish community proclaiming itself as in nearly unanimous hostility, not merely to the existing power, but to the power which had seemingly established itself in prescriptive omnipotence. . . . The influence of all this can scarcely be overstated. Old Edinburgh was no more.'

The Tory party could not venture on a public meeting, but they have always excelled in aristocratic dinners, and they held their annual Pitt Club gathering the following month, which was attended by no fewer than 700 champions of the British Constitution. Lord Cockburn says the dinner was held four months in advance of the proper date, Pitt's birthday, in order to have it on the same day with the Fox dinner, the annual Whig gathering, 'that whatever we might do with the rabble, they might contrast us with their gentry.' And so they did, the Whigs mustering only about 500. In point of fact, however, this was the first public dinner the Whigs had ever attempted, their early gatherings having been confined to a few determined Liberals, watched as suspicious persons by Sheriff's officers. 'The lawyers' addresses,' Lord Cockburn adds, 'were of less consequence than those of an order of men who, till about this period, had shrunk from exposure—the ordinary trading citizens. Some of them spoke excellently; and the rise of booksellers and haberdashers in this line was very

symptomatic.' Among those here referred to was Adam Black, who proposed the health of Jeffrey on this occasion.

Sir Walter Scott, whose political prejudices warped his powerful mind to a lamentable extent, referring to these dinners in a letter at the time said, 'The Foxites had also a very numerous meeting —five hundred at least, but sad scamps.'

But a new excitement was in store for the citizens of the northern metropolis. This event was the visit of George IV., who landed at Leith on the 15th of August 1822, of which Mr. Black gives the following reminiscences :—

'Bailie Leechman, who held the office of Admiral of Leith in the Town Council of Edinburgh, was appointed to receive the King on his landing, with due ceremony. The Leithers had always chafed under the assumed supremacy of Edinburgh in this matter, and their Magistrates were ready to do their duty on this occasion. While the Edinburgh Bailie was preparing to receive His Majesty in due form on bended knee, as he stepped ashore, Bailie Macfie of Leith brushed past him, and with more cordiality than ceremony seized the King's hand, and, with a hearty shake, congratulated him in the name of the Leith Magistracy on his safe arrival. Near the head of Leith Walk was an extemporised gate, where the Magistrates of Edinburgh presented the keys of the city. The Calton Hill was covered with people, and

the whole scene, as the procession passed by the Calton Hill to Holyrood House, was magnificent and exciting. The great day of the royal visit was that of the procession from the Palace to the Castle. The streets were lined by the public companies and trades, generally dressed in blue coats and white vests and trousers, that being the dress recommended by the King. In various places galleries were erected for the accommodation of different public bodies. At that time I was a Commissioner of Police, and our gallery was close by St. Giles'. I recollect our having some discussion about the dress we were to wear, and deciding in favour of black, although we understood the King disliked it. I well remember the appearance of the *cortège* as it came up the High Street, the King attended by grandees of both kingdoms and Ministers of State, but none so remarkable as Sir Walter Scott, limping on his thick walking-stick beside Sir Robert Peel, his face beaming with exultation and loyalty. Next day there was a grand banquet, attended by the nobility, the magistrates, and the *élite* of the community, at which the King called for a bumper to the Lord Provost, dubbing him a baronet as *Sir* William Arbuthnot, whence he was called the Royal Baronet. During the eight days of the King's visit there were great demonstrations of loyalty. Many of the Highland Chieftains attended with their "tails"; and the pipers playing their liveliest airs were heard early

in the morning,—at a distance very pleasant and exciting.

'All these demonstrations of loyalty did not proceed, so far as the people were concerned, from any regard for the Government or the King, for they generally disliked the one, and despised the other. But this was the first time for nearly one hundred and fifty years that the capital of Scotland had been graced by the presence of its Sovereign. . . . George IV. was really a noble-looking man, in person every inch a King, and for the moment all his faults were forgotten.'

This year a bill having been introduced by the Lord Advocate, Sir William Rae, making some slight improvement in the existing system of municipal election, Mr. Black again brought forward and carried, in the Merchant Company, a series of resolutions approving of the Bill so far as it went, but condemning it as quite inadequate.

The following year Mr. Black removed his shop from 57 South Bridge to 27 North Bridge (formerly the General Post Office), where he continued for the next twenty-eight years, when he finally removed to the other side of the street, to No. 6 North Bridge. His business had gone on gradually increasing, and after his removal to the North Bridge he began to be recognised as one of the principal booksellers in Edinburgh. He had also published a good many books of a solid and useful character.

It was not, however, till 1827 that he took his place as a publisher of the first class by purchasing the copyright of the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* on the disastrous downfall of the great house of Constable and Company. His capital was not yet sufficient to justify his venturing single-handed on this large undertaking, and he had secured as partners Thomas Allan, banker and proprietor of the *Caledonian Mercury,* and Abram Thomson, bookbinder, with the addition afterwards of Mr. Wight, Allan's partner. Before his bankruptcy Constable had made all the arrangements for publishing a new edition (the 7th) of the *Encyclopædia,* and had entered into a contract with Mr. Macvey Napier to edit the work. That contract Mr. Black and his partners adopted in all its terms, including a total salary of £6500 to the editor, to be paid by instalments, as each half volume appeared. Mr. Napier was at that time editor of the *Edinburgh Review,* Professor of Conveyancing in the University of Edinburgh, and one of the principal clerks of the Court of Session, so that his hands were pretty full. James Browne, LL.D., was engaged as sub-editor, and on him necessarily devolved the burden of the work, for which he was extremely well qualified by his extensive knowledge, great literary faculty, and readiness in its exercise. The publication commenced in March 1830, and was completed in 1842. The outlay on this edition was £108,766, of which £8755 were expended on editing, £13,887

on contributions, £13,158 on plates, £29,279 on paper, £19,813 on printing, £3356 on stereotyping, £14,305 on binding, and £5354 on advertising. The number of complete copies sold was what might now be reckoned the small one of 4500.

During the course of the publication Messrs. Allan and Wight became bankrupt, and their shares in the property were bought by Black and Thomson. Thomson died in 1837, and Mr. Black, having bought his share, became sole proprietor of the *Encyclopædia*, which he was thenceforth able to manage and control with more satisfaction to himself. He exercised a constant personal supervision over the printing, and even took upon himself not seldom to make alterations on the proofs without consulting the editor. The corrector of the press was Robert Fairlie, afterwards partner in the *Witness* newspaper with Hugh Miller. He was a very capable and trustworthy man, and Mr. Black specially charged him to keep a watchful eye over the matter, as well as the typography, and to inform him if he came upon anything that seemed likely to give offence. This was particularly to be apprehended in theological articles; and in spite of the publisher's caution and liberality of ideas the offence in due time came. Mr. Blanco White was advertised as one of the contributors, having been engaged to write on Spanish subjects, for which he was specially qualified. A broadside was immediately discharged at the *Encyclopædia* from the batteries of

the Roman Catholic Church, to which Blanco White was intensely obnoxious, as an 'apostate priest,' and a powerful exposer of priestly tyranny and abuses in Spain. It was even asserted, with indignation, that he had been employed to write articles on the doctrines of the Romish Church. So far was this from being true, that Mr. Black, after due consideration, had determined, as the fairest way of presenting controversial subjects to the world, that an eminent representative of each church or denomination should be asked to contribute an account of the body to which he belonged, their principles, and polity. He at once contradicted the allegations in reference to Blanco White, and explained the impartial plan on which the proprietors of the work intended to proceed. But in avoiding Scylla he fell into Charybdis. As soon as it was announced that Roman Catholics were allowed to expound their own views in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the anti-Popery champions fell foul of the publishers not less indignantly than the Catholics had done. It happened also that Dr. Browne was married to a Roman Catholic lady, which, doubtless, was taken into consideration as an element of suspicion to the ultra-Protestant mind.

Towards the close of the year 1835 a public meeting was held in the Assembly Rooms, for the purpose of forming an Edinburgh Protestant Association, at which the Rev. William Cunningham (afterwards Principal of the Free Church College in Edin-

burgh) informed the audience 'that the Papists, ever alive to the advancement of their own purposes, sent a communication to the publisher of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, to the effect that unless he would allow them to revise and superintend the articles in the work in connection with, or having reference to Popery, they would use their influence to prevent its circulation, and he believed concessions were made by the proprietors of the work, and he knew there were various plain traces of Popish influence in altering several articles.'

'This,' says Mr. Black, 'came like a thunderbolt upon us, and had we not been able to rebut the calumny, it would have been ruinous.' He lost no time in raising an action of damages for libel, concluding for £10,000. Dr. Cunningham, who was as honest and straightforward as he was rash and fearless, was satisfied, on making full inquiry, that he had been misinformed and had done wrong, and he made an ample apology, in which he explained that the statement complained of rested on authority which warranted him in believing it at the time. 'The real calumniator,' says Mr. Black, 'was the Rev. Mr. Craig,[1] who loaded the blunderbuss, but was afraid to fire it.'

In 1830 Mr. Black took a tour through Ireland, chiefly for the purpose of introducing the new edition

[1] Episcopal incumbent of St. James's Chapel, and very Evangelical.

of the *Encyclopædia* to the Irish trade. Excepting in Dublin and Cork, there was scarcely found anywhere a bookseller worth calling on; and in some considerable towns very few books were sold except Roman Catholic prayer-books. He found the people pleasant and hospitable, but thoughtless and fond of display, much more ready to invite one to dinner than to pay an account. At Dublin, though he lived in the principal hotel, Gresham's, he was so plain in his style and dress that the booksellers began to doubt his identity. They expected that the publisher of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* would at least have some kind of equipage, and give some genteel entertainments. His Dublin agent kept two carriages, had a town and country house, and frequently gave sumptuous dinners, for which his creditors had to suffer in due time.

CHAPTER III.

1831–41.

THE nation was now entering on a great crisis, and the long struggle for a more just representation of the people in the council which made their laws and disposed of the national revenue was at length nearing victory. Edinburgh had borne its part in the struggle with distinction, and the summer of 1831 was a time of high excitement in the city. Earl Grey had been called to the councils of the new King, William IV., and authorised to form a Ministry on the basis of making Parliamentary Reform a Cabinet question. The second reading of the Reform Bill was carried by a majority of one, but on one of the vital clauses the Government was defeated by a majority of eight. This was followed by a dissolution, and the country rang with the cry, 'The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill!'

Francis Jeffrey, now Lord Advocate, was sure to be elected for the Perth burghs, but the inhabitants of Edinburgh were so desirous to be represented by

the man who, with the exception of Sir Walter Scott, had done most to bring renown and honour to his native city, that a petition praying for his election was, between Saturday and Monday afternoon, signed by 17,400 men. The election, it has to be remembered, was still in the hands of the self-elected Town Council. The other candidate was the many-named Robert Adam Dundas, of the Arniston and Melville family, afterwards Christopher, and finally Nisbet-Hamilton. Mr. Black, who was present, thus describes the election and the sequel :—

'I contrived to get into the council-room, which was crammed with a highly excited audience. Jeffrey was proposed by Councillor Chambers (not William or Robert), and seconded by Dr. Gairdner. Dundas was proposed by the Provost, William Allan of the Glen, and seconded by Bailie Learmonth, afterwards the last of the self-elected Provosts. There was some hope that Jeffrey might succeed, though there could be no doubt that it was well known to the clique how every vote was to go. Two tried to screen themselves from the odium of voting for the unpopular candidate by moving and seconding the Provost. These were Treasurer Anderson and Councillor Neill. Had their votes been required, there was little doubt that they would have gone for Dundas.

'One of the Councillors proposed that the candidates should state their views. This was resisted by the Provost, as contrary to the usage of the burgh,

with something like an insinuation that it was illegal. After a good deal of altercation, Jeffrey himself making a strong remonstrance, it was agreed that the candidates should be heard. It was an unprecedented circumstance that they should even be present, for before this the farce was all arranged by the Dundas family at Arniston, and it was not considered necessary that their nominee should make his appearance at all. If he did appear, he was kept in an adjoining room till the Council had duly belauded the man sent them to elect, and testified their loyalty to the Crown and to the house of Dundas, by unanimously electing him as the representative of the city of Edinburgh. The door of the room was then opened, and he was introduced to the Council, a full-fledged M.P., and thanked his thirty-three constituents for electing him as their representative.

'On this occasion, for the first time in Edinburgh, the candidates appeared before the Council, and stated their views on public matters. This, of course, did not affect the vote, and Mr. Dundas was elected, though, if the citizens had been polled, Jeffrey would have had nineteen out of every twenty in his favour. Of the Town Council, seventeen voted for Dundas, fourteen for Jeffrey, and two for Allan. The Exchange was filled with a multitude anxiously waiting the result, and large numbers were assembled in the High Street. When the result was announced, their

rage broke out, especially against the Provost. He got tolerably quietly through the Exchange, but when he got out into the High Street, the mob hooted and jostled him all the way down to the North Bridge, where it was actually proposed to throw him over. I am not sure but some attempts were made to carry the threat into execution, but he fortunately escaped uninjured, and worked his way to the head of Leith Street. Here he was assailed with a shower of stones from the newly macadamised street; and sought refuge in a shop, where the shutters were hastily put up on the windows, and the door secured. Seeing the large and increasing mob, I flattered myself that from my popularity as Master of the Merchant Company, I might be able to induce the people to disperse, and, mounting a barrel which stood at the shop door, tried my best oratory, but in vain. Mr. William Gibson-Craig next took my place, and exerted his persuasive powers, but to as little purpose. At length a more effective mob-dispeller appeared in the shape of a troop of cavalry. The mobbing, however, continued in various parts of the town throughout the night and next day. The Lord Advocate addressed the crowd, and entreated them, as they regarded the character of the city, and the cause they professed to support, to disperse quietly to their homes, which they ultimately did. His reception was very different from that of the Provost. The horses were unyoked from his carriage, and he was drawn home in triumph.

He was soon after returned to Parliament by the Perth burghs.

'Years after this, a clerk in a shipping company, of which I was chairman, fell into great poverty, as the natural consequence of dissipated habits. He came to me repeatedly seeking charity, and when at last I got tired of him and resisted his importunities, he had recourse to what he considered an irresistible claim—"It was me that had nearly coupit Provost Allan ower the brig!"'

The public excitement on the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords, and the resignation of the Ministry, was tremendous. A deep and dangerous feeling of indignation pervaded the people at seeing the boon they had so longed for snatched from them when it seemed secure by a small body of hereditary legislators. The public feeling in Edinburgh found vent in a great meeting in the King's Park on 16th May 1831, attended, it was calculated, by about 50,000 people. The chairman of the gathering was Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, and among the speakers were Sir J. A. Murray (afterwards Lord Murray), Sir J. H. Dalrymple (afterwards Earl of Stair,) Sir R. Keith Dick, Messrs. W. Gibson-Craig (afterwards Sir William), James Craufurd (afterwards Lord Ardmillan), James Aytoun, advocates, R. W. Jamieson, W.S., and Adam Black. The speaking, as became the occasion, was sufficiently energetic. Demonstrations of this kind throughout the country made it

plain that the great mass of the population was in a mood not to be trifled with, and that the will of the people must prevail against that of the Lords.

Charles X., ex-king of France, was at this time residing in Holyrood, and could see from the Palace windows the formidable multitudes swarming into the Park, the trades in procession, with their banners displaying threatening devices and mottoes, specially directed at the House of Lords. It must have reminded the exile king with a shudder of the dreadful scenes he had witnessed in his youth at Paris and Versailles. He had found an asylum in Holyrood from 1796 to 1815, and now he had come back to Scotland on being driven from his throne after the 'three glorious days' of July 1830.

The Reform Bill finally passed, after several more dangerous crises, on 7th June 1832. Mr. Black lost no time in calling a private meeting of the leading reformers to consider what course they ought to take. At the same time he published a pamphlet on the representation of the city, under the name of 'A Shopkeeper,' naming various public men eligible for the honour, and recommending in conclusion Francis Jeffrey, Lord Advocate, and the Hon. James Abercromby. 'To show,' he says, 'how soon public benefits are forgotten, when I mentioned Mr. Abercromby's name, some of our friends asked who he was, though it was only a few years since he, with Lord Archibald Hamilton, had been our principal supporter in Parlia-

ment in procuring Burgh Reform.' Lord Cockburn says of him, that 'he had for many years so identified himself with the cause of his countrymen that long before popular election was introduced, he used to be described as the representative, not of the city, but of the citizens!' At a meeting of the Merchant Company soon after this, Mr. Black moved that measures should be taken to secure the return of these gentlemen 'as the first real representatives of the city of Edinburgh,' which, remarkable to say, was unanimously agreed to. What, it may be asked, had become of the Tory merchants? A committee was appointed, with Adam Black as convener. This was the first 'Liberal Committee' in Edinburgh. The total expenses were ludicrously small, in comparison with those of later times, even in uncontested elections. They did not exceed £200, and even of that modest outlay the members were relieved by the constituency.

The first thing to be done was a requisition addressed to each of the desired representatives. That to Jeffrey was signed by 1260, that to Abercromby by 1170 electors. The only way to get the names of the electors was by copying the lists of voters placed on the church doors, and this was voluntarily and gratuitously done by shopkeepers' clerks.

The theatre in which the Tories had hitherto disposed of the representation of Edinburgh was sadly changed from the snug Council-room where thirty-three

discreet and well-advised men provided the citizens with that *simulacrum* of a representative. It was now to be done in the open air at the City Cross, *coram populo.* But the upsetting Whigs were not to be allowed to walk the course, and the Tories started to oppose them a very estimable country gentleman, Mr. Forbes Hunter Blair, connected with some of the principal men of the city, but scarcely known to the inhabitants generally.

At the nomination Jeffrey was proposed by Sir James Gibson-Craig, seconded by Convener Wilkie, Abercromby by Adam Black, seconded by Andrew Skene, advocate. Mr. Hunter Blair was proposed by Sir F. Walker Drummond, seconded by Sir John Forbes. The result of a poll was—

Jeffrey	4056
Abercromby . . .	3865
Blair	1519

From a collection of squibs and ballads connected with this election it appears that the objection to lawyers and persons connected with the existing Government, which have become stereotyped in and about Edinburgh, were on this occasion urged with great pertinacity and bitterness, though with little success. One might imagine, judging from these not very witty effusions, that the most popular of all the competitors was the fluent and irrepressible 'Jemmy Aytoun,' the most 'promising' of candidates. The constant references to Adam Black, whose name

afforded easy scope for the play upon words suited for such occasions, indicate that he was regarded as the moving spirit of the party whom he officially represented as Convener of the Liberal Committee.

About the same time the election for the county of Midlothian took place, when Sir John Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, was elected in opposition to the sitting member, Sir George Clerk of Penicuik. Sir George's nomination was seconded by William Bertram, farmer, Lawfield, a good old Tory, and uncle of Mrs. Adam Black. His spirit was much grieved by the revolutionary tendencies of his relatives. 'Thae twa,' he said, 'Willie Tait and Adam Black, they'll disgrace us a' yet.' William Tait was brother of Mrs. Black, and, like his brother-in-law, was of advanced opinions, to which free expression was given in the able and popular magazine of which he was editor and publisher. *Tait's Magazine* was equally distinguished by literary merit and freedom from bigotry. One of its most valued contributors was Thomas De Quincey, who found no restraint in expressing his Tory sentiments in its pages. Messrs. Cobden and Bright were also occasional contributors.

Mr. Tait, though a member of the Established Church, was one of the most sturdy opponents of the local tax for the benefit of the clergy of the city, of which we shall have to speak by and by. The controversy in regard to the Annuity Tax had at this

period assumed a formidable aspect, and it continued for thirty years longer to form one of the chief and bitterest motive powers in the politics of Edinburgh. William Tait having refused to pay, was duly incarcerated in the Calton Jail, and detained there four days, during which he lived comfortably in the house of the governor, was visited daily by his friends, and had quite a jolly time. Having thus lifted up his testimony, he paid the obnoxious tax on the fourth day, was duly discharged, and dismissed in state. At the entrance of that baronial pile he stepped into an open carriage and drove through the streets, escorted by a procession of trades' deputies bearing banners. He expected his good brother-in-law to bear him company in the car of triumph, but Adam specially disliked show, and declined the honour. At the first election of the reformed Town Council in the following year Tait had the reward of his fellow-citizens' approbation by being placed at the top of the poll in the First Ward. 'Few men,' says Mr. Black drily, 'have acquired the glory of martyrdom at a cheaper rate.'

At this election, which caused great excitement, Mr. Black was elected in the same ward with Duncan M'Laren, J. F. MacFarlan (bailie), Robert Thomson (bailie), William Purves, and James Aitken. Among other notable citizens chosen were James Spittal (Lord Provost); James Aytoun, advocate; Ralph Richardson, merchant; R. W. Jameson, W.S.; Gil-

lespie Graham, architect; Dr. Lizars; T. Grainger, C.E.; and William Chambers, bookseller.

Mr. Black was asked by some of the councillors to stand for the provostship, but positively refused, having made up his mind to support Mr. Spittal, who had been one of the few steady friends of reform in the old council. He also declined to be proposed as bailie, having his hands fully occupied in his business, but had no objection to the treasurership, hitherto almost a sinecure, little imagining what he was undertaking.

On the day following the election of the Town Council, 6th November 1833, a public dinner was given in honour of the newly-elected members for the city, at which Adam Black had the honour of presiding. About 400 were present. After the healths of the King, the Queen, Princess Victoria, and the rest of the royal family, had been drunk, the chairman proposed the health of the Duke of Sussex, as one who had 'particularly strong claims on all lovers of constitutional liberty, the best friend of the constitution, the best friend of the people, the best friend of the peerage, and the best friend of the monarchy.'

In the course of his speech, proposing the health of Mr. Jeffrey, the chairman said:—

'His patriotism is not of yesterday, but was conspicuous at a time when to advocate Liberal principles was to stop the road to preferment, and to expose to suspicion and danger.' (Here the chairman produced

a proof-sheet of a number of the *Edinburgh Review*, printed about twenty years before, on which was the following note by the printer, a worthy bailie of Edinburgh:—*A more than ordinary share of Mr. Jeffrey's sagacious prudence will certainly be necessary in preparing the above for the public eye: there are certainly such things as Newgate and a Pillory.* The production of this document was received with tremendous cheers and laughter.) 'Gentlemen, it is not necessary to revert to these days of darkness; for now that Liberalism is in vogue I have heard the services of our old tried patriots depreciated by zealous novices in patriotism, who in time of danger suffered that fervid love of liberty to spend itself in silent aspirations, or at most in gentle murmurs.'

His examination of the city accounts soon led to the unpleasant discovery, hitherto carefully concealed, that the city was hopelessly bankrupt. There was no resource in these circumstances but that usually resorted to by bankrupts—the best possible settlement with creditors. It appeared from an investigation of the municipal accounts that £400,000 were owing to ordinary creditors, and about £250,000 to the Treasury, for advances on account of Leith Harbour. The Corporation had been in the habit of borrowing money freely, at five per cent, from all who chose to lend it, which they spent with equal freedom, regardless even of decency. There was no 'self-denying ordinance' in those days: a member

of the Town Council had a preference when any job was at the disposal of the Council. The Deacons of Trades were *ex officio* members of the Town Council, and these offices were matters of keen contest and intrigue in the various trade corporations, being in fact worth a good deal of money. The Deacon of the Masons claimed as a right to be employed as builder of any public works, and charged his own prices without check. The Deacon of the Wrights, of the Plumbers, of the Printers, and of all the other trades, did the same, and so the thing went comfortably round in the Corporation ring, till the rude blast of reform blew open the Council doors, and revealed the shameful fact, so long concealed by the hypocritical guardians of 'time-honoured institutions,' that the capital of Scotland was hopelessly insolvent. When, ten or twelve years before this, the hateful agitators for Burgh Reform had asked for a statement of the affairs of the city, they were assured by the magistrates that the finances were in a flourishing condition. It now appeared that the assets were not equal to one-half of the city debt. Treasurer Black proposed as a composition that the creditors should receive annuities of two and a half per cent on their debt, guaranteed by the town. The proposition was reprobated by the creditors, and by none more loudly than by some of the old councillors and their friends, who had partaken largely of the public spoil in the good old times. Many and disagreeable meetings and dis-

cussions were held, in which the Treasurer necessarily took the chief part on behalf of the town. In the interests of economy also he had to do several things that seemed pitiful, but were necessary to prove that the public money was not to be wasted on mere display till the city had paid its debts. The salaries of all the city officials were reduced by a half, and superfluous officers were paid off. Among the latter were the two men who carried the sword and mace before the Lord Provost; but the poor fellows said they would do the duty for nothing rather than that the Chief Magistrate should be so sadly shorn of his dignity. Even the extra gilded lamps which had always burned before the doors of the Provost and Bailies were ordered to be lighted no more, and it seemed as if the glory had departed from the proud city, and that she sat in the shadow of her humiliation. The inexorable Treasurer went even farther to convince the inhabitants of Edinburgh that they had been brought low, and that it was not a time for needless hilarity. The ringers of the merry bells of St. Giles were paid off, and their pleasant clanging was no longer heard at one o'clock, to remind the laborious citizens of Auld Reekie that life is not all a weariness. They were now to be taught, and meditate on the lesson, that honesty is before all things, and that those who cannot pay their debts have no right to be merry.

The feasts of the Town Council at the public

expense were also abolished, and instead of the usual unlimited banquet for the new councillors, there was now a modest dinner at 10s. 6d. per head, for which each man had to pay out of his own pocket, if so inclined, which probably some economical councillors were not.

The great event of 1834 in Edinburgh was the Earl Grey Banquet, which took place on 15th September, on a scale far surpassing anything of the kind hitherto attempted in Scotland. It was a demonstration to celebrate the passing of the Reform Bill, and in its magnitude and the quality of the speeches it was worthy of the occasion. The demand for tickets was so great that no room in the city was sufficient to accommodate half the applicants. A temporary pavilion was erected in the yards of the High School, where 1500 sat down to dinner, 300 more dining in the hall of the school. The Duke of Hamilton was to have presided, but failed at the last moment, on the ground of ill health, and his place was taken by a more vigorous reformer, the Earl of Rosebery. Many animated speeches were delivered; those of Lords Brougham and Durham were particularly remarkable. Among the rest Adam Black was honoured with a toast, which he proposed with discreet and pithy brevity.

In June 1835 he published a pamphlet on the financial affairs of the city, propounding a scheme for a settlement with the creditors. In the preface

he intimated that he solely was responsible for the statements and suggestions offered, which had not been submitted to the Town Council. He proposed that Government should forego a large part, if not the whole, of the debt due to the Treasury, on certain conditions; that the debt should be consolidated; coupons bearing two and a half per cent interest given to the creditors; and a sinking fund established, providing for the extinction of the debt in thirty years. Shortly after this, Government sent down Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, to examine the state of affairs of the city and report. His report, published in the following year, recommended nearly what Mr. Black had suggested. The creditors, however, were not satisfied. They insisted on getting either seventy-five per cent down, or interest at the rate of three and a half per cent. Numerous meetings and warm discussions, verbal and written, again took place, in which the interests of the creditors were chiefly represented by Colonel Macdonald of Powderhall, and Mr. Christie, accountant, and those of the city by the Treasurer. Various modifications were proposed, and at one time they were on the eve of agreeing, on nearly the same terms as were ultimately arranged, when the stout Colonel stood out, and Mr. Black's term of office expired. He had been three years in office, and refused to be re-elected, but before retiring made a full statement to the Council of all that had taken place, and the condition in

which the case was left to his successor, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, who had the honour of finally adjusting the difficulty, to the lasting benefit of the city.

In addition to these harassing conflicts with the city creditors, Mr. Black had to take his place, as a conscientious Independent, in the forefront of the battle which had for some years been raging between the Dissenters and the Established Church, and which is not yet done. More grave as the situation now seems for the defenders of the Established Church, the bitterness of the conflict is nothing compared to what it was fifty years ago. If the breaches in old ramparts have widened, so also have the thoughts of men. It is interesting to find such a determined and uncompromising opponent of the Established Church as Adam Black was in 1835, writing thus in the quietness of his mellow age :—

'Of all the public contests in which I have been engaged, I look back on none with so much regret as the violent discussions between Churchmen and Dissenters. Much of the heat that was struck out between them was unhallowed fire. Although I still adhere to the principles I then professed, experience has shown me that, however correct they may be in theory, Dissenters are no more to be trusted as friends to true liberty than Churchmen. Both sides, when they have the power, are ready to abuse it in their own favour. I have especially to

regret that my zeal for Voluntaryism brought me into conflict with that great and good man Dr. Chalmers.'

The history of the Church of Scotland from 1830 to 1843 centres round that honoured name. Chalmers had succeeded Dr. Andrew Thomson as the leader of the more lively, earnest, and enthusiastic section of the Church of Scotland; and in proportion as he was larger in his thoughts, more simple and genial in his character, more irresistible in his eloquence, his influence was the greater. He was honestly possessed with the idea that the Church of Scotland was truly a heaven-born institution, designed for and capable of doing for the good of Scotland what no other human institution could do, if only men believed in it, and worked for it, as he had shown them how to do, and continued to do down to the last day of his busy life. One of the great schemes into which he threw himself with all his burning energy was that of Church Extension. His idea was to provide a church and minister for every 2000 inhabitants, as the only means for getting hold of the lapsed and lapsing masses of the great towns. In proportion as this scheme was developed and extended, so did the opposition of the Voluntaries, to whom it seemed chiefly a scheme for the extension of the State Church, against the existence of which they were bound to keep up an abiding protest. The new Town Council had not been long in office when a proposal was

made to build by subscription a new church in the Cowgate, one of the lowest and most neglected parts of Edinburgh. The proposal was excellent, but the condition that the new church was to be added to the number of the city churches in connection with the Establishment, many of which were half-empty, was fatal. Dr. Chalmers pleaded the case before the Town Council with all his eloquence, but in vain. The majority of the members were Dissenters, and the scheme was rejected. Much of the time of the corporation was wasted on discussions of this kind, which were sometimes conducted with great acrimony, and kept alive in Edinburgh, to a degree unrivalled in any other important city of the empire, an amount of sectarian jealousy and bitterness that has wrought unspeakable evil, and derogated grievously from the claim of Scotland's capital to be the chief representative of her intelligence and education. Mr. Black was one of the most vigorous of the combatants of those days on the Voluntary side, and in 1835 published an able pamphlet, entitled *The Church its Own Enemy.* The arrogant pretensions of the Establishment, contrasted with some lamentable examples of its shortcomings, afforded sufficient scope for a well directed assault. Foreseeing, with his usual sagacity, that the internal controversy at this time agitating the Church of Scotland could end only in another secession, he took as a motto on his title-page the proverb 'Every wise woman buildeth her house, but

the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.' On this subject he afterwards says :—

'With increasing years my views on these subjects were considerably modified, and I felt that my expressions ought to have been more moderate. While I consider that on such an all-important subject as religion we should carefully endeavour to discover the truth, embrace it earnestly, and conscientiously adhere to it, yet I would recommend my children as far as possible to avoid sectarian disputes, especially such as excite bitterness and strife. In the various controversies in which I have been engaged in my public life, I do not recollect anything much to be regretted except in connection with these church disputes.'

The pamphlet in reference to which he makes these remarks, though very plain-spoken, is quite free from bitterness or intemperance. The same may be said of every speech he made, even on the most exciting questions.

While a member of the Town Council, Mr. Black took a special interest in business connected with the University of Edinburgh, of which the Council were patrons up to 1859. The greatest name which he assisted in adding to the roll of the University's fame was that of Sir William Hamilton, of whose claims he was the special champion against a party in the Council, who opposed his election on the ground of his deficiency in theological, especially evangelical

soundness![1] Among the first members of the reformed Council were two doctors, who made it their special business to meddle with the Medical Chairs, in the direction of what they considered 'retrenchment and reform.' They were generally supported by the extreme Liberals of the Council, especially by 'Jemmy Aytoun.' In 1834 the College Committee recommended a reduction in the fees of the University classes, especially the medical ones. In the course of a sharp debate on the subject, Mr. Black made an elaborate speech, showing that the fees at Edinburgh, as compared with other schools, so far from being high, were very moderate, and that the diminution of the emoluments of the Professors would ultimately tend to depreciate the reputation of the University. 'The greatest injury that could be done to the University,' he said, 'was the perpetual intermeddling with its arrangements, unsettling the minds of the students, and disheartening the Professors.' His motion not to interfere in the matter was carried by 19 to 10.

Another interference with the monopoly of the Professors, of a more liberal kind, was carried by Mr. Black, to the great advantage of medical education. At that time students qualifying for a medical degree were obliged to attend all the medical classes in the University. No 'extra-mural' teaching, however

[1] See Professor Baynes's 'Sir William Hamilton' in *Edinburgh Essays*, p. 272.

superior, as it sometimes was, to that of the 'intramural' Professors, counted for anything. The student who acquired and paid for his real knowledge at other classes out of doors was yet obliged to pay his extra guineas and waste his extra time in attendance on a University class, where, perhaps, a superannuated Professor, eminent in his prime, discoursed in dumb show to a crowd of noisy and irreverent students. Mr. Black had the merit of inaugurating a reform in this respect, which has greatly tended to the prosperity of the University, heightened the standard of its medical education, and promoted that wholesome emulation which is so conducive to intellectual life and the advancement of science.

One of Aytoun's absurd proposals was, that the College Committee of the Town Council should inquire into the teaching in all the classes in the University. The Treasurer resisted this proposal, as going quite *ultra crepidam*, but the Council, in a temporary fit of hallucination, adopted it. The Committee met, with Aytoun as chairman, and he proposed that they should commence by examining the syllabus of subjects taught in the Natural Philosophy class. Mr. Black again protested against the absurdity of meddling with things they did not understand; but Aytoun was firm: they had undertaken a public duty and must discharge it. So they went stumbling through the hard phraseology of the syllabus, with some faint idea of the meaning, till they came to

Catoptrics and Dioptrics, and there they stuck fast. Even Aytoun's chief ally, R. W. Jamieson, realised the absurdity of the situation, and the inquiry ended there and then in an explosion of laughter.

Mr. Black was afterwards of some use to the University, though not a member of the Town Council at the time. Being in London in 1838, he was asked by the College bailie, Donaldson, to make some remonstrance to the Government against the shabby treatment of the University by the Treasury in regard to the Library. An Act had been recently passed modifying the privilege enjoyed up to that time by all the great libraries of the United Kingdom, of getting a copy of every book published in the kingdom. In lieu of this burdensome privilege, any of the libraries enjoying it might receive from the Treasury, if they preferred it, an annual grant of money, equal to the average value of the books received during the three years preceding the Act. All the Scottish Universities prudently accepted this alternative, while the British Museum, the Bodleian, the Cambridge, the Advocates', and the Trinity College, Dublin, Libraries retained their privilege. It turned out, however, that the Treasury thought proper to make a considerable deduction from the sum stated as the average value of the books, and Mr. Black was asked to try to get this redressed. This he succeeded in doing, having, on the advice of Mr. Abercromby, gone direct to the

Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, on the subject. He thus describes his interview:—

'I waited on his lordship at the hour appointed; the day was cold, and as soon as he came into the room he made me draw in my chair to the fireside, took the other side himself, and said—"Now, let us hear all about it." I discussed the matter with the greatest freedom, showing him the injustice of the deduction complained of, and ended by saying I had often heard of the extravagance of the Government, and the large sums paid for the services of their own friends, while they would huckster about a few pounds for the promotion of literature. "Now, my Lord," I said, "I don't like to hear you ill spoken of." He laughed and said, "We must see what can be done." It was no wonder that his Lordship was a universal favourite. There was a kindliness and a *bonhomie* about him that must have smoothed down many of the difficulties he had to encounter. I am happy to say that the result of this interview was an addition of £150 a year from the Treasury to the Edinburgh College Library, and I suppose to the other Scotch University Libraries.'

About this time Mr. Black was preparing for publication a collection of Brougham's speeches in four volumes. That wonderful man was as careful of his posthumous fame as Cicero, and was determined that nobody but himself should have a chance of giving the public the benefit of his fiery orations.

He took great pains in revising them, but with his usual impatient rapidity. He classified them according to the subjects, and prefixed to each section a historico-biographical preface, in which, as occasion offered, he vented his displeasure or grudges at friends and foes. One of those who had mortally offended him was his old friend Abercromby, Speaker of the Reformed Parliament up to 1839. A little before this Brougham had, in his disgust at his Whig friends for their time-serving, and, above all, for their unpardonable slowness to admit his incomparable merits, marked his sense of their misconduct by lending his support for a time to the Conservatives. Some one had alluded to this in the House of Commons, in terms which galled him, and which he thought it disgraceful on the part of the Speaker not to check. In revenge he took a fling at Abercromby in one of his prefaces. Speaking of the important influence of petitions to Parliament, and speeches in support of them, he went on to say (vol. i. p. 499):—

'The Whig Government have resolved that no petition shall now be discussed—that whoever presents it shall merely state its substance, after telling the body and the place it comes from—and that no other member shall make it the subject of any observation. To this plan for stifling the people's voice, and giving the ministers of the day and their majority in Parliament an absolute control over the policy of the empire, disarming the Opposition of their main

weapons, and shearing the people of their chief strength, the Speaker, Mr. Abercromby, has unhappily lent *himself as a willing accomplice*, if he was not indeed the *hatcher of the plot*. It is of little moment to reflect that but for the policy of former and better times, *he* would now have been in the honourable but cheerless exile of an Edinburgh sinecure judgeship, as his ministerial coadjutors would have been doomed to exclusion from power on the benches of an eternal Opposition. It is of more importance to remark that unless a speedy end is put to the present course of proceeding, the mainstay of English liberty, the only effectual safeguard against misgovernment and oppression, is taken from the people of these realms.'

Mr. Black, on reading the proof-sheet in which this passage occurred, could not reconcile it with his regard for Mr. Abercromby to publish a reflection upon him which he believed to be as unjust as it was offensive. He accordingly asked Mr. Napier, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, who probably exercised more editorial control over Brougham than any other man had attempted, to write and request him to modify the obnoxious phrases. Mr. Napier, however, declined to interfere. Mr. Black himself accordingly wrote to Brougham, requesting him to reconsider these expressions in reference to Mr. Abercromby, adding:—'I cannot forget his great services to Edinburgh and the Liberal cause when we had few to

speak for us or assist us, and am grieved to hear any of our champions harshly spoken of by our friends. I am persuaded the injustice of writers calling themselves Liberal to your Lordship yourself has hurt the cause of Reform most seriously, and given great pain to its genuine friends.'

To this appeal Brougham replied :—

'My dear Sir—You are so good a Liberal, and so little of a party-jobber, that I have altered the passage into a compliment, which is *very, very, very little* deserved at my hands. No man ever exposed himself more to the odium of his *colleagues* for another than I did for him, when they could not endure his name to be mentioned; and I also carried what is called, unjustly, a job for him by main force. I have been requited by such foul ingratitude as I have hardly experienced from any other man, and all to pay a mean court to ministers, of whom he should be ashamed now to receive any favours. However, I have yielded to old feelings of friendship, awakened by the passage producing in you an effect which I did not expect.—Yours, H. B.'

The corrections made on the proof were, to substitute for the words italicised above, the words *the support of his authority* and *author of the scheme.* The 'compliment' consisted of the substitution of the words *this distinguished and excellent person* for the word *he.*

The plan for 'stifling the people's voice,' which

formed the subject of the above outburst of indignation, was an alteration made on the rules of procedure in the House of Commons. Previously, any member presenting a petition might make a speech on the subject and raise a discussion. Petitions had become so numerous, and speeches upon them so regular and endless, that the business of the House was in danger of being brought to a stand unless something were done to check the nuisance. Hence the 'plot' to save the public time, of which Mr. Abercromby was suspected by Brougham to be the 'hatcher.' What would he have thought of Mr. Gladstone's plot for the same purpose in 1882!

It is pleasant, however, to know that the great ex-chancellor and his ancient friend became quite reconciled after that.

In 1839 Abercromby was raised to the peerage as Lord Dunfermline, and the citizens of Edinburgh had to find a successor to him and colleague to Sir John Campbell. In May of that year Mr. Black suggested, and was asked by the Liberal Committee to write to Mr. Macaulay, and assure him that if he would allow himself to be nominated there was no doubt of his election. He accepted the invitation frankly, stipulating only that the election was not to cost him more than £500: beyond that he could not afford to go, his income, though sufficient for a man of simple tastes, being small. On 29th May he addressed the electors of Edinburgh in the Music Hall, and capti-

vated them, as Mr. Black truly says, by his manly eloquence. He was elected on 4th June, and re-elected in September following on being appointed Secretary at War. He continued member for Edinburgh till 1847, during which time Mr. Black was naturally the person with whom he most communicated on all public matters. The letters that passed between them were few, and almost all on political or local questions; but their friendship was close and uninterrupted, from Macaulay's first appearance in Edinburgh to his death in 1859.

In the following year, 1840, Mr. Black was the principal actor in a singular performance in honour of the Queen's marriage. It was proposed by the Town Council, of which he was not at this time a member, that the event should be celebrated by a refection in the Parliament House, to be called a 'banquet,' at the rate of 2s. 6d. per head, to which all comers were eligible who chose to pay that moderate sum. In the good old close Corporation times the feast would have been confined to the Council and their aristocratic friends and patrons 'at a bountiful old rate,' for which the base rabble of outside citizens would have to pay. This time it was resolved, in addition, that the very poor of the city, without distinction, should be invited to a suitable 'banquet,' consisting of a mutton pie, a roll, and a pint of porter, per head. The idea was admirable, but the provision for its realisation was miserable. A Committee of

the Council had been appointed to make the arrangements, with a few other citizens added, of whom Mr. Black was one. But nobody, it would seem, was charged with any special duty in the matter. The poor people were invited to come at one o'clock to the Green Market, a large area below the North Bridge, now occupied by the station and sheds of the North British Railway. Presently the waggons appeared at the gate with the longed-for viands, and there immediately ensued a rush in that direction, and an utter confusion, baffling all description; the strong and greedy in front getting more than their share; the weak and needy in the background helpless. The scene, as witnessed from the parapet of the North Bridge by passers-by, was unparalleled; the hungry, struggling crowd pressing forward; the policemen flinging the pies and rolls over their heads to those in the rear; Mr. Black, with his coat torn from the nape of the neck to the tails, fighting against fearful odds to preserve order and get something like justice done! The poor, hungry, disappointed people, he said, 'behaved wonderfully well.'

It was expected that the profit on the 2s. 6d. tickets would have paid for this strange banquet, but it fell far short, and Provost Forrest and Mr. Black had to make up the deficit between them.[1]

[1] In a letter which he wrote to the *Caledonian Mercury*, defending the Committee to whom the matter was entrusted, and the poor people, from some unjust reproaches that had been cast upon them, he said: 'The scene was one of melancholy interest, and a practical

Before the end of this year these two gentlemen stood in a keenly antagonistic position. The Lord Provost's term of office expired in November, and Mr. Black was prevailed on by his friends to allow himself to be nominated. His eminent fitness for the office and his public services were undeniable; in these respects the claims of Sir James Forrest were small in comparison. Mr. Black, however, was not only a Dissenter, but a formidable one, while Sir James was not only a member of the Established Church, but a Non-Intrusionist. On this difference the contest wholly turned, and it proved one of the keenest and bitterest that had set modern Edinburgh by the ears. Mr. Black had no great desire to be Provost, but as soon as it appeared that he was to be opposed to the uttermost, simply on the ground that he was a Dissenter, he threw himself into the fight with all his energy, feeling that not merely his personal rights as a citizen, but those of the whole body of citizens outside of the Established Church, were involved. The general feeling in Edinburgh was rather in his favour; among those free from ecclesiastical prejudice it was probably unanimous. But it so happened that the majority of the Council at

illustration of what had been so feelingly demonstrated by Dr. Alison in his most important publication on the state of the poor; and if this incident shall assist in directing attention to the adoption of means for the amelioration of their condition, it will be a much more creditable result than paltry squabbling about the regularity or irregularity of the proceeding.'

the time were Tories and Churchmen, and the cry of 'The Church in danger,' with such men as Dr. Chalmers and Hugh Miller to back it, proved irresistible. The Non-Intrusion party, though mostly Liberal in politics, for this time allied themselves with the Tories, on the 'fundamental principle,' to use the words of the *Witness*, 'that all considerations of secular politics should be rendered subordinate to the cause of the Church.' This seems to have been the first of those unnatural and repulsive alliances of heterogeneous and mutually hostile elements, which afterwards became a distinguishing feature of Edinburgh politics at election times. Mr. Black's chance of election depended on the votes of three new members of Council, two of whom were elected for the express purpose of supporting him. On the election day these two voted against him, and the result was that Sir James Forrest was re-elected by a majority of three. During the contest he had distinctly professed that he sought re-election in order to prevent the election of a Dissenter. In returning thanks for the honour he declared with unction, 'I disclaim from the bottom of my heart all hostility to Dissenters!'

As usual on such occasions, after the election the Lord Provost invited all the Council to dinner. Mr. Black sent the following characteristic reply to the invitation :—

'*Saturday, December* 30, 1840.

'My Lord—If I cannot consistently accept your invitation for the 13th, I hope your Lordship will not attribute it to any petty feeling of resentment or disappointment on my part, for had the late contest been merely a struggle between opposite political parties, or rested only on the personal claims of the candidates, as soon as it had terminated I would cordially have joined in social intercourse as well as in public business with my opponent. But I consider the grounds on which your Lordship rested your opposition to me so injurious to a large class of the community, and so utterly inconsistent with the professed principles of the political party with which you and I have been acting, and the consequences so mischievous to that party, that I feel as if I should hardly be acting with perfect honesty were I, by partaking of your Lordship's hospitality, to put on the appearance of either justifying or palliating what I consider wrong.—I am, etc.'

Shortly after the election Mr. Black was entertained at a public dinner on a great scale, as a tribute to his public merits, and a special protest on behalf of the Liberal principles which in his person had been so flagrantly outraged. The dinner was held in the Waterloo Rooms on 25th November 1840, Lord Dunfermline in the chair, Sir James Gibson-Craig croupier, and was attended by upwards of 700 persons, including many distinguished citizens

and strangers.[1] Lord Dunfermline proposed the toast of the evening in a speech characterised by the hearty frankness and calm judicial power which distinguished him at all times. To revive the recollection of forgotten and local feuds is sometimes wrong; but this was an occasion of so much importance as a protest on behalf of great principles, and so outstanding as an event in the life of Mr. Black, that a little extra space must be given to the speeches delivered. The tribute paid by such a man as Lord Dunfermline to the merits of Adam Black is too valuable to be omitted. He said:—

'Gentlemen, in mingling once more, and probably for the last time, in your concerns, I have departed from a rule which I had prescribed for myself, and to which I hoped I should have been able to adhere. But when I was asked to join with you in paying a public tribute of respect to Mr. Black, who has been so ungenerously and unjustly treated (hear, hear, and cheers); and to concur with you in giving a pledge that we would assert and maintain, by all due means

[1] The *Scotsman*, in noticing this banquet next day, said, with its usual independence:—'We regret to find that some of the Whig lawyers whose attendance might have been expected absented themselves. The timorous and fastidious spirit which dictated this conduct does them no honour, and augurs ill for the future prospects of the Liberal party.' It is certainly strange to find that the only Whig lawyers whose names appear in the list of that evening's company are, of advocates—Sir William Hamilton, Alexander Currie, and A. S. Logan; of Writers to the Signet—J. G. Craig and Rod. Mackenzie. For the 'timorous and fastidious spirit' shown on this occasion, the Liberal party suffered in no long time, being shamefully sat upon in 1847 by the sectarian influences to which they too much deferred in 1840.

within our power, this great principle, that no man ought to be affected in his civil rights on account of his religious opinions, I felt that I would be ungrateful to Mr. Black, from whom I have received acts of friendship and of kindness, which I am proud thus publicly to acknowledge—that I would be ungrateful to you for the confiding support which you gave me when I had the honour to represent you in Parliament; and that I would be faithless and untrue to the principles I have always professed, and which each succeeding year has only strengthened and confirmed, if I had hesitated to obey your summons. The highest tribute which can be paid to the character of Mr. Black, is to be found in the fact, that during the whole of the late contest, in which the fiercest passions were aroused and called into action, in no one instance has the perfect purity and uprightness of his conduct been questioned (loud cheers). This is the more remarkable when it is recollected that Mr. Black has passed the whole of his life in this city; that he has been among the foremost in all your political and local struggles; that he expressed his opinions, and at times when they were most unpopular, with the most unreserved freedom and undaunted courage (great applause); and farther, that during the late contest he inflicted unsparingly on some that censure which it appeared to him their conduct deserved. Mr. Black could only have passed through this ordeal without a taint or blemish, and secured for himself this proud and noble distinction, by having proved his title to be respected as a man of pure and blameless character (loud cheers). . . . Gentlemen, I have been long enough connected with this city to recollect the first dawn of the revival of Liberalism. It was Mr. Black that watched over its youth. It was he who encouraged and strengthened it by his judicious counsel and manly efforts; and when he has seen it flourish and become triumphant, it is indeed a strange fatality, and no honour to some portion of the

Liberal party (cheers)—that he should be now defeated by the failure on their part to give him that support to which he had such irresistible claims. Those, however, who have successfully opposed Mr. Black, have unconsciously conferred upon him a greater distinction (great applause)—they have connected his name with a great principle. In his person an indignity has been offered to the friends of civil and religious liberty; which they will naturally resent the more keenly on account of the great merit and unimpeachable character of the candidate they supported' (renewed applause).

Mr. Black's reply may be taken as a good specimen of his style of speaking, generally plain and unadorned, but sometimes rising, when the occasion moved, into a strain of the best sort of eloquence, the expression of natural and honest feeling, warmly and well.

'It is not in language to express the sense I feel of the honour you have done me—an honour which is enhanced by the circumstance of its being conferred upon me as identified with the principles of civil and religious liberty (cheers). I consider it no detraction from your approbation that it is not bestowed for any personal merits on the humble individual who now stands before you; but in consequence of his name having been associated with a cause dear to every freeman. And I receive it as a pledge of your approval of the manner in which my friends and I conducted ourselves in the recent struggle, in which the fundamental principles of liberty were assailed (much cheering). If I and my supporters have any merit, it is only that of having gone straight forward. We listened to no compromise of principle for the purpose of attaining our immediate object—choosing rather to be completely defeated, with our honour untarnished, than that the principle for which we professed to be contending should be violated in a single instance, or in the smallest degree (cheers).

If anything could add to the high gratification of this testimony of your approbation, it is the fact of its being communicated by a nobleman who has long allowed me the great privilege and honour of numbering him among my sincerest friends (loud cheering)—a patriot who fought in the foremost ranks of the assertors of his country's freedom, when all around was drear and dark—who won the confidence of the citizens of Edinburgh by his disinterested devotion to their service, when that entailed only obloquy and reproach —who, by his wisdom in council, his unflinching courage in acting, and his undeviating adherence to the principles of civil and religious liberty, has, through a long life, and under the most trying circumstances, maintained unsullied the glory of the name of Abercromby (great cheering). And allow me to say, that it is not one of the least of the grounds of gratification to me that I stand in the midst of my friends and fellow-citizens, who have known my manner of life from my youth up (cheers). It has been said that a prophet is not without honour except in his own country; but in this instance, even where my foibles, and failings, and faults, must be known, you are willing to overlook them all, and only to notice what you consider commendable; and to confer upon that a meed of praise far beyond what it deserves. I am proud to claim Edinburgh as my native city (cheers). Here have I spent almost the whole of my life, and here I hope to end my days. When a very young man, I was so imprudent as to take two steps which threatened to obstruct my progress to respectability in life. First, I joined one of the most obscure and uninfluential bodies of Dissenters. Think you, my lord, that a young man, not without the natural aspirings of youth—not without the common sense to perceive that the dissevering himself from the respectable, the wealthy, the powerful classes of his fellow-citizens, does not feel the painfulness of the sacrifice—does not look about for some apology to conform to received opinions, and secure

the countenance of those who can best promote his views in life. And what is there to hinder him but conviction—(cheers)—a sense of duty—a fear to offend that Being to whom alone he is responsible in matters of religion (cheers). Where this is the case—where the man acts on conviction, and professes no opinions dangerous to society—is it either in conformity with the dictates of common sense or of true religion, that he should be considered less worthy to be trusted in the management of private affairs or public business? (cheers). Shall man take it upon him to say to his fellow-worm—I will tolerate you to worship God according to your conscience, and be thankful for my clemency; but, if you will not worship in the way that I think best, or in the way that the State directs, you must not presume to aspire to public office; at least you must be excluded from the higher offices of the State (great cheering). It has been argued that there is no persecution in this; and in reference to the late contest one of the Edinburgh journals says, "The man is persecuted whom the Civil Magistrate requires to recant his religious opinions; the Magistrate has in this case overstepped his province, and interferes where divine authority should be paramount; but the Magistrate and Legislature may righteously exclude from certain functions those who cannot comply with the conditions which grow out of them"—or, in other words, we acknowledge that the old fashion of burning at the stake to make a man recant his religious opinions, is persecution, but to attempt the same thing by excluding him from offices, or by branding him as a member of a degraded cause, is a righteous act in the Magistrate, or in the people who resort to such measures. Such doctrines are so monstrous that they only require to be exhibited in their naked deformity to secure the reprobation of every right-hearted man (cheering); and I assure you, my lord, I do not regret the result of the late election, because it has roused the attention of the public more extensively,

and displayed the evils of intolerance more palpably, and advanced the cause of liberty more surely, than could have been done by a successful competition (great cheering). To my sin of being a Dissenter, it is known to most of you that, at a very early age, I added that of Reformer. To many of my friends my case then appeared desperate, and more than one of them, in the spirit of real kindness, expostulated with me on the folly and danger of my conduct, and tendered to me very prudent advice; but, being confident that I was right, I persevered in the course I had chosen (cheers). But it may be necessary to remind my younger friends that the word Reformer, although spelt with the same letters, was a very different word in the year 1812 and in the year 1832 (laughter and cheers). The man who owned it was a marked man—he was shunned or jeered by those who appropriated to themselves all the virtues of loyalty—his very bill was not so discountable as another man's—and even in 1817, in the vigorous attack upon our corrupt burgh system, which I had the honour to commence, we were obliged to have recourse to a circumlocution in order to avoid the ominous word Reform, lest we should alarm some of the more timid of our adherents, and Burgh Reform was transmogrified into "an improvement in the system of our burgh polity" (cheers). Before this, few, very few, dared to speak out. Nevertheless the sacred fire of liberty had been long smouldering in the hearts of the citizens of Edinburgh, and it only required the small breath of a slight agitation to blow it into a flame. And from that day the citizens of Edinburgh, nobly seconded by our Hon. Chairman, Lord Arch. Hamilton, and a trusty band in the House of Commons, persevered in their exertions, till they cleared out the Augean stable, and marched in the representatives of the Ten Pounders (great cheering). Here it would be unpardonable to omit mentioning the extraordinary, the untiring and persevering assistance rendered by that prince of patriots,

our most excellent croupier, Sir James Gibson-Craig, during the whole of that and of every struggle for the liberty of the subject (the whole company here rose as by one consent, and continued to cheer for several minutes, waving handkerchiefs, etc.) Indeed, it is but justice to say, that in all our exertions the citizens have been nobly seconded by the Whig party, with whom we were glad to co-operate—not because they were Whigs—not because they were in opposition—not because they were in power, but because they coincided with us as friends of civil and religious liberty (cheers). That was the bond of our union; we acknowledge no other; and while they adhere to that, we adhere to them; but should they ever desert the standard of liberty, they will not be followed by the citizens of Edinburgh, who will stand by the old flag while there is a rag of it left flying (immense cheering). In the late election there were some unseemly examples of backsliding, but I have reason to believe that the section who deserted their colours was small and by no means influential. I cannot believe that that great party to whom Britain and the world are indebted for such great advances in liberty will ever as a body tarnish their fair fame by countenancing the endeavours of any who would undermine or overturn the foundations of freedom (cheers). I cannot forget that it is to them we are mainly indebted for the blessings which flowed from the Revolution of 1688—that fifty years ago Mr. Fox moved the repeal of the Test and Corporation Laws—and that although he and his friends were defeated on that and succeeding occasions, the conflict was again and again renewed, till at length the victory was achieved in 1828 on the motion of Lord John Russell (loud cheers). I cannot forget that it was the same party who struggled for many a long year to remove the civil disabilities from the Catholics, and who in 1806 preferred the loss of place and power to the abandonment of the principle of religious liberty, and that they never

relaxed in their endeavours till the emancipation of the Catholics was accomplished (cheers). I cannot forget that they were the earliest and steadiest advocates for the abolition of slavery, and that it was under their administration that the fetters of the slave were broken off, and Great Britain vindicated from the reproach of this unholy traffic (loud cheering). I cannot believe that those who have for so many years fought manfully and successfully under the banner of civil and religious liberty will ever prove recreant to their principles; but I trust that the effect of this day's proceedings will be to encourage them to oppose with unflinching courage every attack on the citadel of our liberties, and to support every measure which has a tendency to strengthen its bulwarks. At all events, I trust it will be made apparent that, whatever others do, the citizens of Edinburgh will continue steadfast in their adherence to the great principles which have actuated them in all their struggles for liberty and good government, (loud and long-continued cheers).

CHAPTER IV.

1841–1849.

THOUGH defeated in the contest for the civic chair, Mr. Black continued a member of the Town Council for the next three years, and took a prominent part in its business. In February 1841 he made a motion to petition Parliament for the abolition of the Corn Laws, and the reduction of the duties on sugar, coffee, and timber. In the course of his speech he gave a calculation showing that the saving to the inhabitants of Edinburgh by the abolition of the Corn Laws, and the equalisation of the Sugar Duties, would amount to about twice the amount of their whole local taxation. The motion was carried by a large majority.[1]

From this time till 1846, when the Corn Laws were repealed, the question of Protection and the abolition of the Corn Laws was one of the chief

[1] An illustration of the iniquitous effect of the Corn Laws is afforded by the prices of wheat in the autumn of that year at home and abroad. The average at Dantzig was £1 : 14 : 1, at Hamburg £2 : 10s., at London £4 : 2s.

topics of public discussion throughout the kingdom. Great public meetings were held in Edinburgh on the occasion of a visit from Cobden and Bright, whose clear and powerful speeches carried the conviction and sympathies of the majority of the inhabitants entirely with them. Mr. Duncan M'Laren took a leading part in this agitation, and, chiefly through his exertions, a conference of deputies from all parts of Scotland met and sat for a week in Edinburgh, discussing the subject.

The members for the city, Macaulay and Gibson-Craig, were hampered by their allegiance to the late Government from going so far as the majority of their constituents. Both were totally opposed to Protection, and in favour of the abolition of the Corn Laws, but they had, with the approval of their constituents, supported the proposal of the Liberal Ministry for a small fixed duty instead of a sliding scale. They now felt bound in honour to support in Opposition the measure they had voted for as members of Government, and they believed also that the demand for total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws was Quixotic and irritating. Among the few letters of Mr. Black which have been preserved is a long, able, and outspoken appeal to Macaulay on this subject, from which the following is an excerpt:—

'I understand that you are favourable to the entire removal of all restrictions on the trade in corn, but think the change should be delayed or be brought about gradually.

'If you and your constituents are agreed upon the fundamental principles, I think you might safely yield this part of the detail to them, for if it is to be of advantage to remove the restrictions, why deprive us for any length of time of this advantage, why subject us for ten, five, or even one year to laws which you allow to be attended with pernicious consequences? I know you will say that the suddenness of the change will occasion great individual hardship. It must be allowed that this, like all great changes, would occasion considerable individual suffering, for change in itself must be considered as an evil though it may ultimately be attended with good, and that is the reason why I think the repeal should be immediate, because, though the hardship to individuals may be greater at the first, the suffering will not on the whole be so great as a continued succession of sufferings occasioned by a continued succession of changes arising from a gradual deduction from the amount of duty.'

Macaulay replied with equal frankness, declaring himself as much a Free Trader as ever, but expressing his belief that, with the forces against them in England and Ireland, the masses of ignorance and prejudice, a compromise was the only chance of success. 'You must work,' he said, 'with such tools as you have.' He might hazard his seat in Edinburgh, but that hazard he was quite resolved to run. 'Of this I am certain, that if, holding the opinions I have expressed, I did not run the hazard, you would despise me heartily.' This unyielding Roman spirit did not cost him his seat on that question, but it helped in due time to do so.

Mr. Black mentions in his reminiscences as a

curious fact that the only opposition they encountered at any of their Anti-Corn Law meetings was from working men and Radicals. 'I recollect one,' he says, 'in the Waterloo Rooms, where I was one of the speakers, which was broken up by them.'

The great event of 1842 in Edinburgh was the visit of the Queen and Prince Consort. The visit of George IV. had the advantage of greater novelty, but the enthusiasm of 1822 was hollow compared with that of 1842. The object of the one was the institution represented by that most uninteresting King; the objects of the other were the persons whose youth and virtues made the institution more worthy of loyal enthusiasm than it had been for centuries. The preparations for the royal reception and the accommodation of the public were made on the most elaborate scale, but the fates decreed that the result should be a ludicrous *fiasco*. Platforms for spectators were erected all along the road from Granton to Inverleith, and three councillors, of whom Mr. Black was one, were deputed to wait at Granton for the first appearance of the royal yacht in the Forth, and communicate instantly with the Magistrates. It was expected that the Queen would arrive about 4 P.M. on 31st August. Mr. Black and the rest waited at Granton till it was dark, and then concluded that even if the Queen should arrive that night she would not land till morning. So they went home, leaving a bailie at Granton Hotel to give timeous notice to

the Provost and Magistrates of the appearance of the royal yacht. At that time Mr. Black lived in Fettes Row, the windows of which look towards the road from Granton. He was up early, duly arrayed himself in courtly garments to appear before the Queen, and took his breakfast peacefully. He had scarcely finished when he heard a gun booming from the Castle. Presently he saw with some alarm a squad of dragoons galloping over Canonmills Bridge. Very soon there came driving up Pitt Street a plain open carriage with a pale lady and a handsome gentleman seated in it, whom he immediately recognised as the Queen and Prince. More carriages followed, and a gathering crowd at some distance. The Royal Bodyguard of Archers mustered from all quarters, and rushed wildly after the royal carriage, which, on reaching the top of the hill at Princes Street, drove rapidly on to Dalkeith without ever stopping. The Duke of Buccleuch and Sir Robert Peel were at Granton to receive the Queen, but Her Grace the Duchess was taken by surprise, like some lesser dignitaries, and was not at home when Her Majesty arrived at Dalkeith Palace. There was no telegraph in those days. When Mr. Black got up to the Council Chambers, he found the whole municipal body assembled in full costume, but in no gay humour; the Provost raging as if he had been hoaxed, a crowd outside raging at him and the other magistrates as if they had been to blame for the public disappoint-

ment. Office has its sufferings as well as its joys, and the poor little Provost, though perfectly blameless in the matter, had to bear the whole brunt of the popular indignation, and never got rid of the unjust suspicion of having been caught napping. The most popular song of the day for some time in Edinburgh was a new version of that familiar favourite, 'Hey, Johnny Cope,'—

> 'Hey, Jamie Forrest, are ye waukin' yet?
> Or are ye sleepin' in yir bed?
> Hech, man! get up, for the drums do beat,
> To meet the Queen in the morning!'

In some hosiers' windows night-caps were exposed for sale labelled 'Jamie Forrest night-caps, warranted not to waken in;' and four years after this, when Macaulay and Gibson-Craig were elected members for Edinburgh, great amusement was caused by a night-cap, intended for Sir James, being thrown up to the hustings. It fell at Mr. Macaulay's feet, and he handed it to Lord Provost Black, who politely passed it on to Sir James on the opposite side of the platform. Sir James was at the moment addressing the people under difficulties, and not appreciating the joke, flung it back among them with great indignation, and to the uproarious amusement of the crowd. The cause of this untimely appearance of the Queen was a thick fog down the Forth which detained the yacht. She lay behind Inchkeith all night, and between eight and nine in the morning glided out,

and was at Granton pier in a few minutes. The Queen had suffered much from sea-sickness on the voyage, and was more disposed for rest than for a public display; so she hurried on to Dalkeith. The proof-sheets of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's history of her visit to Edinburgh were sent for Her Majesty's revision, and over the word 'sea-sick' she inserted 'very.'

A few days after this the inhabitants of Edinburgh were gratified by a royal procession through the city on a scale of fitting grandeur. The reception of the Queen and Prince was most hearty and enthusiastic. Loyal addresses from the Town Council were presented at Dalkeith Palace. The Queen read her answer, of which Mr. Black says, 'Her voice was sweet and distinct, her pronunciation and intonation perfect; indeed she was the best speaker I ever heard.'

In 1843 took place the greatest event in the history of Scotland since the Rebellion of 1745, the Disruption of the National Church. Mr. Black being a Dissenter took no personal part in the struggle, but he took a keen interest in it, and judged more accurately of its importance and probable results than the Ministry of the day, who were neither capable of appreciating the nature of the contest nor truly and well advised as to its probable issue. There was not in Scotland at the time a man whose opinion on any Scottish subject they were more entitled to rely on than Lord Dunfermline, one

of the wisest, shrewdest, most sound-headed of men. But with all his wisdom and knowledge of the world he was unable to appreciate the amount and reality of the old fervid unworldly spirit of the Covenanting days, which still lived in Scotland, with such men as Chalmers and Candlish and Guthrie and Miller to fan it into flame. When the secession of the party led by these men was threatened, he asked Adam Black how many he thought would come out? 'I said,' writes Mr. Black, 'if they are honest,—and I believe they are honest,—at least one hundred of them will secede. He laughed at me, and emphatically maintained that not a dozen would leave the Church.' In fact close on five hundred left.

The story of the Disruption has often been told, and there is nothing new to tell about it. But the impressions of an eyewitness are always interesting. This is Mr. Black's description of what he saw on the 18th of May 1843 :—'At the meeting of the General Assembly in St. Andrew's Church it was generally expected that it would result in a disruption, but opinions varied very much as to the number that would go. With many others I waited in the neighbourhood to see the end, for I took more interest in it than if the spectacle had been the disruption of Shakespeare's Cliff. At last the Moderator, Dr. Welsh, came out at one of the side doors, perspiring at every pore, and wiping his face with his handkerchief. Shortly after, the main door

opened, and the seceding members of Assembly poured out, and marched in a long stream down Hanover Street, three abreast, the Provost at their head, down to Tanfield Hall. It was a glorious sight.' Lord Jeffrey, who was also a spectator on that occasion, said it made him proud of his country.

The Disruption was generally considered a calamity for Scotland, but Mr. Black was far from thinking so. He says:—'Some years after, when talking with Sir James Graham, who had been Home Secretary in 1843, he said to me there was nothing in his life he more regretted than the result of the Government decision in that matter. I replied that if he had nothing more than that to trouble his conscience, he might keep himself very easy, as I considered the Disruption had proved a great benefit to Scotland. When the two parties, the Evangelical and the Moderate, formed one ecclesiastical body, they were so powerful that, when the high-flying party had the ruling of the roast, and infused their spirit into the mass, they were quite rampant, and ready to ride rough-shod over the Dissenters. But when they split, their power for mischief was diminished; they were a check upon each other; and a rivalry in Christian effort commenced. Hundreds of churches were built; hundreds of schools were opened; and each vied with the other in schemes of usefulness.'

He tells an anecdote of one of the Non-Intrusion renegades, who had made the most violent speeches

when there was no apparent danger, and when the day of trial came were found wanting :—'A minister belonging to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh had declared that sooner than desert his principles and submit to the decisions of an Erastian Court "he would lay his head on the block." He on second thoughts had thought better of it, however, and kept his head, his status, and his stipend as a minister of the Church of Scotland. On the first Sunday after the Disruption, some wag in the parish laid down a block of wood and an axe at the vestry door, to refresh the memory of the worthy minister as he entered the church.'

It was due to the Disruption that at the municipal election of 1843 there was no voice raised against the elevation of a Dissenter to the civic chair, and in November of that year Mr. Black was unanimously elected Provost. He had at the previous Whitsunday removed from Fettes Row to 38 Drummond Place, and in that house he lived during the remainder of his life.

Some of the Councillors took an early opportunity of throwing down an unpleasant bone of contention in the Town Council. It had been the practice from time immemorial for as many of the Magistrates and Council as chose to attend the High Church in their robes on Sunday forenoon. It was now moved, and carried by a large majority, that the practice should be discontinued. Mr. Black disliked pageantry of

all sorts, and this pompous display of gowns and chains and cocked hats not less than others; but he was not in favour of altering the old custom, as he doubted the legality of doing so. That opinion was confirmed by a decision of the Court of Session, to which a few of the Established Church councillors appealed.

Not long after this a movement arose among the industrial classes of the city for the establishment of public baths, and great expectations were held out of the extent to which they would come forward in support of the undertaking. These expectations were not realised. The amount subscribed by working men was a mere trifle, and the money got from the general public was not nearly sufficient. A committee of management was appointed, consisting of equal numbers of working men and honorary contributors; and money for the erection of the baths was borrowed, for which Lord Dunfermline, Sir J. Gibson-Craig, Mr. Black, and Mr. Duncan M'Laren were securities. A great part of the work fell on Mr. Black, who had many meetings and not a little trouble with the working men. They showed so much jealousy and opposition in carrying out an undertaking entirely for their own benefit, that Mr. Black was thankful when an opportunity arose for placing the baths on a self-supporting system, conducted by a person willing to undertake the responsibility.

Mr. Black was one of the oldest members of the

Independent Congregation meeting in Argyle Square Chapel, and was startled on a Sunday in March 1845 by hearing the minister, Dr. Lindsay Alexander, announcing a meeting to be held there to petition Parliament against the grant to Maynooth Catholic College. Mr. Black held the opinion, not common among Dissenters, that so long as any of the public money was bestowed on religious institutions it was unjust to withdraw that particular grant. He was therefore in the disagreeable position of being obliged to oppose his brethren of the church on this question, or of abstaining from doing so, and thereby incurring the suspicion of being afraid to maintain his unpopular principles. Anything rather than the latter he would at any time submit to. He resolved, therefore, to attend the meeting, merely to testify against the anti-Maynooth cry, which was at this time one of the great shibboleths of orthodox bigotry. He had no hope of prevailing, but he came prepared with a series of resolutions, which he moved as an amendment on the motion to present the petition. To his amazement the amendment was carried; and the worthy chairman, who had entered the meeting with no idea of such a result, laden with sheets of paper, pens, and ink for signatures to the petition, had now the mortification of signing, as chairman, the resolutions of the meeting.[1]

[1] The resolutions were as follows :—

'That, in the opinion of this meeting, all grants of money from

The organs of ecclesiastical opinion, Established Church or Dissenting, were unanimous in condemning these resolutions, and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh was held up to reprobation as little better than the Man of Sin. He and his resolutions were represented as enough 'to make the blood of righteous men run cold.' A quiet but very orthodox paper of

the public treasury for the support or encouragement of particular theological tenets are unwarranted, either by sound policy or Scripture authority.

'That, in conformity with this view, the proposed additional grant to the College of Maynooth is objectionable; at the same time it does not appear to be expedient to petition Parliament at present against it, for the following reasons:—

'1st. The most zealous opponents of the grant are the parties who have appropriated to themselves the largest share of the public property which has been devoted to upholding ecclesiastical establishments, and whose object evidently is to rouse the zeal of Dissenters to co-operate with them in maintaining their present ascendency.

'2d. Because we conceive that every man is answerable to God alone for his religious belief, and that the State is not competent to decide what theological tenets ought to be adopted and maintained; therefore, if we were to petition against this grant, on the ground that it was for the support of theological dogmas which we consider unscriptural and dangerous, we should thereby imply that the State has a right to judge what creeds are to be countenanced as true and Scriptural, and thus admit a principle subversive of religious liberty.

'3d. It is an ascertained fact that in Ireland the Protestants, who were in 1766 a third part of the population, were in 1834 only a tenth—the number of Catholics in 1766 being 1,326,860, and of Protestants 544,865, while in 1834 the numbers were 7,190,968 Catholics, and 752,972 Protestants; and firmly believing as we do that the doctrines of Protestantism are founded on truth and Popery on error, we cannot doubt that but for the baneful influence of Protestant ascendency, and the unfair treatment of the Catholics,

that period, called the *Scottish Herald*, thus pathetically characterised Mr. Black's proceeding:—'We confess that we were not prepared for the melancholy exhibition which the Lord Provost of this city made in Argyle Square Chapel on Monday evening last. He moved a string of resolutions which, for childishness of feeling, weakness of argument, and abandonment of principle, have never been surpassed.' So strong was the feeling in Scotland at this time on the subject, that not more than two Scottish members of

truth would have prevailed against error, instead of error making conquests from truth.

'4th. The Catholics cannot be expected to understand the distinctions between the different sects of those whom they believe heretics, or the grounds of their opposition to the Catholics receiving back but a small portion of what they conceive themselves to have been defrauded of by the Protestants; and if they find Protestant Dissenters combining with the Orangemen and No-Popery party in this opposition, it will not only excite their hostility to their Dissenting countrymen, but indispose their minds to the reception of the truth when stated by them.

'5th. Because large grants have been made to colleges exclusively Protestant, and extensive revenues have been forcibly taken from Catholics and bestowed on Protestant institutions; and considering the system which is at present acted on by Government, it does appear partial and unjust that munificent funds should be expended on one class, while a comparative pittance is refused to another.

'6th. While we testify against all grants from the public funds for the promotion of any theological creed, we do not consider that we should be justified in joining in the clamour now raised against a particular sect, and *that* the sect which has suffered from the domination of a High Church party, who, while they take every opportunity of lording it over Dissenters, are now desirous to use them as tools for the accomplishment of their own purposes.

'JAMES MACLAREN, *Chairman.*'

Parliament dared to vote against Mr. Spooner's annual motion for the abolition of the Maynooth grant.

This year Mr. Black had the pleasure of presenting the freedom of the city to Lord John Russell, Sir Henry Pottinger, and his old schoolfellow Sir Charles Napier. The presentation to Lord John was the first of the kind that had taken place anywhere but in the Council Room. The ceremonial was gone through in the Music Hall before a crowded assemblage.

One of the most romantic and historically interesting walks in Scotland is that along the banks of the Esk between Lasswade and Roslin. It had been from time immemorial a favourite haunt of Edinburgh people, and of strangers visiting the Scottish capital. The associations connected with Drummond of Hawthornden and Ben Jonson added to the interest of that neighbourhood. The proprietor in 1845, Sir Francis Walker Drummond, considering the use of that walk by the public a nuisance, in so far as it interfered materially with the privacy of his grounds, closed the gate, and forbade all entrance without special permission. Mr. Black was in London at the time, and wrote an indignant letter on the subject addressed to the acting chief magistrate, for the benefit of the public. This led to the formation of a society for the protection and vindication of the public right of way on paths that have been used from time immemorial, which did signal service in preventing exclusive landowners from depriving the

public of one of their most innocent and wholesome natural rights. Their greatest victory was that over the Duke of Athole, who attempted to stop the public right to pass through Glen Tilt between Blair Athole and Braemar. They were equally successful against Sir Francis Drummond, and against the Earl of Morton, who tried to exclude the public from the lovely walk between Burntisland and Aberdour. The proprietor of Habbie's How had intended to do the same, and tried to persuade Mr. Black that he was entitled to do so. Mr. Black, however, assured him that if he tried it the Society would fight him to the uttermost, and he wisely abandoned the idea.

In July 1845 Mr. Black enjoyed one of the most pleasant privileges which belonged to him as Lord Provost, a voyage in the steam yacht of the Commissioners of Northern Lights, of whom he was *ex officio* one. A few days on board that good ship and an annual dinner are the only recompense allowed to these functionaries for their services to the public, which are by no means nominal. Some time before this a clamour arose against the Board, as inefficient and expensive, and Joseph Hume got a Parliamentary Committee appointed to inquire into its management. The result of the inquiry proved very different from what was expected. The Northern Lighthouses were found to be 'efficiently and economically managed, and the services of the Board constant and valuable.' Mr. Hume asked one of the Commissioners, 'What

remuneration have you for your services?' And was answered, 'An annual dinner.' 'I think,' he said, 'you should have two.'

The trip in the *Pharos*, though pleasant in any weather to those who enjoy the sea, is really part of the duty of the Commissioners, who delegate a few of their number every summer to visit and inspect a certain number of the lighthouses, and have the privilege of taking a guest or two, so far as the accommodation permits. To this gracious privilege are due Sir Walter Scott's *Pirate* and a great part of the *Lord of the Isles.*

Mr. Black and his companions, of whom he mentions only Bailie Wilkie and Sheriff Murray, sailed or steamed from the Broomielaw to Ayr, thence to Corsewall Lighthouse, near the mouth of Loch Ryan, the Mull of Galloway, the Little Ross at the mouth of Kirkcudbright Bay, and the Isle of Man. The lights of the Isle of Man ought, in respect of situation, to be under the Trinity House, but when estimates were taken for them, it was found that the Northern Lights Board could construct and maintain them more economically, and at least as well. After visiting Peel Castle, Douglas, and Castleton, they crossed over to Wales, and Mr. Black and the friends above mentioned were dropped at Caernarvon, whence they made a short tour through Wales, by Beddgelert, Llanberis, Capel Curig, Conway, and Bangor to Chester.

In December of this year Mr. Black presided over

one of the most important public meetings ever held in Edinburgh, for the purpose of memorialising her Majesty to direct her ministers to order that the ports of the United Kingdom should be immediately and permanently opened for the admission of foreign grain and provisions free of duty. The principal speakers were Messrs. Macaulay and Gibson-Craig, Lord Advocate Rutherfurd and Sir Charles Napier; and sympathetic letters from Dr. Chalmers and Lord Dunfermline were read. This meeting probably helped considerably to encourage Sir Robert Peel to adopt the great change of front for which he was preparing, in the face of strong opposition from a majority of his own party, and the virulent attacks of Disraeli. Next year he brought in a bill for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and with the help of Her Majesty's Opposition he carried that 'wise, just, and beneficial' measure.

One of the excitements of Edinburgh this winter was the crusade of George Thompson, an eloquent Anti-Slavery orator, against the Free Church, for having solicited subscriptions, and received liberal aid from slaveholding churches in the Southern States of America. At numerous and crowded public meetings Thompson denounced this conduct unsparingly, and reiterated the cry, 'Send back the money,' till the town was full of it. The children shouted it on the streets, every dead wall was chalked with it, even the pavements were made to cry, 'Send

back the money!' But the money was not sent back.

Mr. Black was of opinion that the Free Church was in a wrong position in regard to this matter, and took the trouble of writing a long and friendly letter to Dr. Chalmers on the subject. He was much annoyed, however, by a motion made in the Town Council, without consulting him, as usage and propriety required, to have the freedom of the city conferred on Thompson. Thompson's merits as an Anti-Slavery orator could not be denied, but the time for conferring this honour upon him in Edinburgh was inopportune, and seemed to have been chosen as a special mark of rebuke to the Free Church. Mr. Black, in making the presentation, carefully avoided anything that could be so interpreted.[1]

In the course of the following year, 1846, Mr. Black was engaged on behalf of the town in a contest with the North British Railway, and achieved a great victory, the ultimate results of which, how-

[1] Mr. Black tells of a very good pun which was made on the orator, who afterwards became member for the Tower Hamlets. He got into a dispute with a fellow-passenger in an omnibus, which from words came to blows. The result was that the eloquent advocate of mercy and benevolence had to appear in the police court, charged with assault. Some time after this, meeting the Rev. Dr. Alexander, he consulted him as to how he should act under some peculiar circumstances. 'Well, Mr. Thompson,' the Doctor said, 'I would recommend to you, in the words of St. Augustine, *moderatio in omnibus.*'

ever, were very unsatisfactory. The Railway Company required for their station the ground occupied by two venerable buildings, Trinity Hospital and Trinity Church. They first proposed to remove the Hospital, and the Town Council agreed to let them do so, if other arrangements were made for the pensioners of the Hospital, equally convenient and suitable. This was done, and an old house in the Canongate was fitted up for the pensioners. The Company next wished the Church removed, and scheduled it in a bill they were prosecuting before Parliament. Mr. Black tried to make an arrangement with them, and proposed that as they wished to deprive one of the city parishes of its church, they should replace it by another, suitable for the parish, to cost from £6000 to £7000. The Company was in the heyday of its power at this time, and declined to do anything more than refer the value of the ground and building to a jury, by which they expected to get it for a small sum. Mr. Black wished the Town Council to oppose the Railway Company in Parliament, but as the city funds were very low, they did not think it wise to encounter so much expense. Mr. Black accordingly determined to take the contest upon himself, and save all expense to the town by being his own counsel.[1] He received authority from

[1] During all the time that he was Provost, Mr. Black made no charge for his travelling expenses when sent to London on public business, which was in this instance three times in a year.

the Town Council to act in such manner as he considered best, and to consult the London agents of the Corporation as to matters of form. He was accompanied by the City Clerk, John Sinclair, an excellent man of business. Before leaving for London, Mr. Black requested an interview with the Railway Directors, and urged them once more to agree to the reasonable proposal of the Town Council. But they were mighty, and would come to no terms, believing probably that the Council would not, in their embarrassing circumstances, risk a Parliamentary contest. Nettled at their obduracy, Mr. Black said, 'Well, gentlemen, however inconvenient for me, I will go up to Parliament and meet you there, and I tell you what is more, I will beat you.' And he did.

The Committee of the House of Commons, after hearing Mr. Black on the one side and Mr. Hope Scott on the other, passed a clause providing for the substitution by the Railway Company of another church in the style and on the model of the old one, or the payment by them to the Town Council of a sum of money sufficient for that purpose. Under an order from the Sheriff, plans for a new church, after the model of the old one, were prepared by Mr. Rhind, architect, and delay in the execution of the railway works being inevitable, the company offered the alternative added by the Parliamentary Committee. They finally paid between £16,000 and £17,000 to the Corporation, as the estimated cost of

the church designed by Mr. Rhind. Delay having again occurred in the acquisition of a site, the rebuilding of Trinity Church was postponed till after Mr. Black ceased to be Provost. It then became for several years a stock subject of sectarian contention, and finally of a lawsuit, which ended in the House of Lords by the decision that what remained of the money paid for the church belonged neither to the city nor to the parish, but to the pensioners of Trinity Hospital. Mr. Black was naturally disgusted at this result of his vigorous efforts for what he considered the interest and credit of the city. He attributed the decision entirely to the spite of Lord Westbury. 'This,' he says, 'I believe the Chancellor did from antipathy to the Court of Session, whose decisions he took pleasure in reversing. I am no lawyer, but it appears to me absurd that the inmates of an hospital should be entitled to sell the church connected with it, and spend the money on their own maintenance. Had this beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture been restored, and placed on the commanding situation provided for it, it would have been one of the greatest ornaments of Edinburgh, but it fell a victim to spite, stupidity, and sectarianism.'

On 18th August 1846 the Scott monument was inaugurated with great masonic pomp and splendour. A long procession of civic and other dignitaries, mason lodges, committees, etc., filled the eastern half of Princes Street with music and banners. The

Grand Master Mason of Scotland, Lord Glenlyon (afterwards Duke of Athole), congratulated the assemblage on the completion of the work, and handed over the monument to the two committees and the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh. To this the Lord Provost replied in terms so fitting and even poetical that they are worthy of preservation here:—

'I congratulate you, the Right Worshipful Grand Master, and I congratulate the countrymen of Sir Walter Scott, on now seeing placed on its pedestal, in this magnificent monument, a statue worthy of its shrine. This tribute of a nation's gratitude to one of the most honoured of her sons adds a new feature of beauty and of grace to his native city, but the halo of his genius sheds a far brighter lustre over the name of Edinburgh and of Scotland. As one burning torch not only illuminates the sphere of its own brightness, but kindles the latent fire in others, so who can tell how many dormant spirits have been roused to arduous and successful exertion by the honourable example of Scott. Even here we see how the glowing genius of the poet has stirred the soul of the architect, and awakened the talents of the sculptor, whose skilful chisel has moulded the rude block into the all but breathing form and features of Scotland's darling son (cheers). While we lament the untimely fate of the gifted architect, we rejoice in the growing vigour of our own citizen sculptor, who, by this exquisite work of art, has given earnest of future productions that will rival the works of the most celebrated artists of this or other countries. The sister arts of architecture and sculpture here vie with each other in presenting their richest offerings to the genius of poetry, history, and romance; and they are themselves signally honoured in combining to honour him, who has

contributed so largely to the instruction and enjoyment of the human race. This monument and statue, admirable for beauty and durability, I trust, will long adorn our city ; but though they crumble into dust, the author of *Waverley* has reared for himself monuments of more surpassing beauty, and more lasting endurance, and more extensive celebrity (cheers). The forked lightning may dash these turrets to the ground, the tooth of time will corrode these marble features, but over the monuments of his mental creation the elements have no power ; these will continue to be honoured at home, and under distant and more genial skies (cheers). Continents as yet unexplored will be taught by the wisdom of Scott, and enlivened by his wit ; and rivers unknown to song will resound with the lays of his minstrelsy; but nowhere will his memory be cherished with fonder attachment and more enduring delight than in the cities and the hamlets of his beloved Scotland (loud cheers.)'

The original committee, consisting of noblemen and gentlemen, had raised large subscriptions, but they were not sufficient to complete the monument, and a second committee was formed, consisting of tradesmen, who succeeded in raising among their own class a sufficient sum for the purpose. It had been determined that the proceedings of the day should terminate with a public dinner, of which the convener of the tradesmen's committee, Treasurer Dick, took charge, and which proved a brilliant success. The Parliament House was again rather conspicuous by its absence of Whigs or Tories; but Edinburgh was there notwithstanding. The entertainment was not so 'select' as high-caste lawyers or landowners might consider fit for them to patronise, but

hearty lovers and admirers of the dearest of all Scottish bards, next to Robert Burns, were there in good force, and did justice to the occasion. About five hundred gentlemen attended, and the speeches were excellent. Among the speakers were Dr. Robert Lee, Messrs. Whyte-Melville, Robert Chambers, A. M'Neill, J. T. Gordon, and J. M'Diarmid. The celebrated Scottish vocalist, Wilson, contributed greatly to the success of the entertainment by singing several appropriate songs.

In November of this year Mr. Black presided at a great public entertainment to celebrate the opening of one of the most important and successful institutions yet established in Edinburgh, the Philosophical Institution. Seldom have so many distinguished literary men and orators taken part in any such meeting, or delivered so many speeches worthy of the occasion. Among these were Archbishop Whately, Professor Wilson, Mr. Macaulay, Dr. Guthrie, Dr. Samuel Brown, Dr. Moir (Delta), Dr. Douglas Maclagan, Professor Nichol, Professor Miller. Mr. Black, who was first President of the Institution, and afterwards an Extraordinary Director, made an excellent opening speech, and gave valuable assistance in the management of the Institution. The office of president has since then been held by Wilson, Macaulay, and Carlyle, and is now filled by Mr. Gladstone.

Shortly after this Mr. Black's term of office as

Lord Provost expired, and he was again unanimously elected.

The same year Mr. Black, who had hitherto been fortunate in avoiding law, was obliged to defend himself in an action brought against him by a son of the illustrious Dugald Stewart, claiming the copyright of the Dissertation contributed by his father to the supplement to the sixth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and £2000 as damages for its publication in a separate form apart from the seventh edition without his permission. The case was tried before Lord Patrick Robertson. The claim at first seemed to Mr. Black ridiculous, but when he found himself in the jury court, with formidable counsel on the other side, he began to feel uneasy, knowing what strange verdicts juries can sometimes give. The pursuer's counsel were Adam Anderson and John Inglis, the defenders' Andrew Rutherfurd and Thomas Maitland. An adverse verdict would have seriously injured the *Encyclopædia*, the publishers of which had at this time advanced nearly £20,000 beyond their returns. After two days' trial (23d and 24th December 1846), the jury returned a unanimous verdict for the defenders.

Mr. Black was all his life a strenuous advocate of unsectarian education. He had in 1832 been a supporter of the national system which Lord Stanley had the honour of conferring upon Ireland, which the Ultra-Protestants of Edinburgh, especially those

of the Established Church, considered it their duty to denounce as irreligious. The national system proposed by the Government of 1846 was opposed with equal bitterness, but chiefly by the so-called Voluntaries of England, led by Edward Baines of Leeds. A motion made in the Town Council to petition against that scheme was met by Mr. Black with a series of resolutions, which he supported in an elaborate and able speech, afterwards published as a pamphlet. The purport of the resolutions was that the Council, without approving of the proposed scheme, but sensible of the difficulties the Government had to encounter in dealing with the subject, were willing to accept it as a boon rather than that the people should be longer left without instruction.

In the same spirit Mr. Black took a leading part, along with Lord Dunfermline, Lord Murray, Sir James Gibson-Craig, and many other eminent citizens, in founding the Edinburgh Industrial School, to carry out, on what they considered a more equitable footing, the benevolent design realised in Dr. Guthrie's Ragged School. The latter professed to be open to all sects, but one of its fundamental rules was that all the children were to attend the religious exercises of the school, in the Protestant form, and to be taught to read the Bible in the authorised version. This practically amounted to the exclusion of the most abject and necessitous of the class to be benefited,—the children, viz., of Roman Catholic

parents who acknowledged the authority of their Church. The plan adopted in the United Industrial School was to give the religious instruction to the children in separate rooms, under teachers of the respective persuasions to which they belonged, and supported by separate funds, altogether apart from the ordinary revenues of the school. No difficulty has been experienced in conducting the school on this plan, which has, in fact, been so far recognised in the national system now fortunately established in Scotland, as the practical solution of the imaginary 'religious difficulty' that so long obstructed the progress of education.

'Now came,' says Mr. Black, 'one of the most painful of the public transactions in which I have been engaged—the rejection of Mr. Macaulay at the election of 1847.'

Some indications have been given, in the course of this narrative, of the gradual growth in Edinburgh of disruptive political forces, unknown in the days when there were only two parties, Whigs and Tories. These growing forces were rather too much ignored or despised by some who ought to have been fittest to judge of their importance. They had shown their power in 1840, and they showed it still more offensively in 1847. The triumph of bigotry hitherto was interesting only to Edinburgh, its triumph over Thomas Babington Macaulay was felt by the British

nation. Mr. Macaulay's Erastian support of State Churches, his calm toleration of Dissent in its various forms, down to the zero of belief, and worst of all, his toleration of Popery, were from the first against him in earnest Edinburgh. He had a provoking lack, also, of that accommodating pliability which enables many candidates for parliamentary honours to pledge, or appear to pledge, themselves to anything that seems popular. He was too well informed and fixed in principles to be unprepared or indefinite on any question of importance. He was too honest to conceal any of his opinions, or to abstain from arguing in support of them, instead of listening deferentially to objections, and cautiously saying that he would give them his best consideration. He had no electioneering tact, no political diplomacy, but argued and acted as if all men were as free from prejudice and open to conviction as he was himself. The objections that arose out of all this assumed, in 1846, the form of a decided opposition, when he sought re-election on being appointed Paymaster-General of the Forces. The opposition was chiefly based on anti-Maynooth and so-called religious principles, and was promoted generally by the more bigoted representatives of the Free Church and Dissent. They wanted a man of 'sound views,' a 'real Christian,' to represent them, however feebly, instead of a brilliant orator and ornament of British literature, who refused to swear by Peden, or even by Chalmers, and dared

to uphold the Scarlet Woman with public funds of which her adherents paid their due share, to the extent of £13,000 a year, so as to enable her to board and lodge her bog-trotting students a little more decently at Maynooth, while no voice was raised against spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on a bloated hierarchy, representing a miserable fraction of the Irish population. The man of 'sound views' and 'real Christianity,' fit to stand in the breach, and represent Scotland's heart and head, against all the powers of darkness, instead of T. B. Macaulay, was found in the person of Sir Culling Eardley Smith, a name before unknown and now as utterly forgotten. At the nomination in July 1846, Lord Provost Black proposed Macaulay in a short, sensible, and as usual, fair and outspoken speech; seconded by Mr. Moncreiff, now Lord Moncreiff. The new champion of Christianity, who was to uphold the place and principles of Edinburgh, in place of its too secular and brilliant representative, was proposed by Sir James Forrest, who had himself the honour of proposing Macaulay in 1839. His reasons for preferring Sir Culling are so amusing that they are worth quoting:—

'We live in very eventful times. No one can tell what events are before us. No one can tell what great convulsions may be preparing in the moral world. We see at this moment, as it were, the opposing forces of good and evil marshalling themselves for a mighty and eventful conflict;

and I say that in these circumstances it is our duty—it is the duty of our friends here and elsewhere—to look around for men alone of high religious principle, Christian men, men of sound views on all those great and important matters, who will carry their Christianity along with them to the Commons House of Parliament, and who will there vote and act as with the fear of God before their eyes,' etc. etc.

With that awful fear, might it not fairly have been added, fear of the Free Church and other important influences? Macaulay had no such fear, and on this occasion he was returned triumphantly by 1735 votes to 832.

The majority was so decisive that the friends of Macaulay and of freedom unwisely despised the enemy, and never imagined that in the course of one year the contemptible minority would be turned into an overwhelming majority. But so it turned out. The Free Church waxed, not only in strength, but in aggressiveness, and she had quite strange and unexpected allies in 1847. Mr. Macaulay, on the other hand, became no more conciliatory or diplomatic; on the contrary, he talked contemptuously of 'the braying of Exeter Hall' about Maynooth and other ecclesiastical matters. Unfortunately there were other questions in a sphere less solemn than that of theology on which Macaulay was equally unsound and provokingly argumentative. One of these was the Excise Laws, in regard to which the wine and spirit merchants of Edinburgh had a grievance, to which he listened with far too unsympathetic ears.

Arguing, as was his wont, with deputations so as to find out the weak points in their case, he led their representatives to believe that he was against them, which he really was not, and the consequence was that they resolved to vote 'solid' against him. This turned the election, which, not for the first or last time in British politics, proved the immense power of combined Bible and Beer. 'The unprincipled nature of the coalition,' says Mr. Black, 'will appear from this, that the sectaries had a constant feud with the publicans, and that the latter have been usually found in opposition to the former. Although I have myself always belonged to one of the strictest sects of Christians, and assisted in all the agencies for the spread of Christianity, both by my personal exertions and money, more than most of the loudest declaimers against publicans and sinners, yet the sectaries have generally been my bitterest opponents in my candidature for office, and I have found my steadiest supporters among the publicans and Papists. But in this instance the publicans made common cause with men whom they considered enemies, and the "unco guid," as Burns calls them, fraternised with the men whom they considered not only as evil themselves, but the source of all evil in others, for the purpose of aiding in procuring them greater facilities for carrying on a trade which they had always said ought to be prohibited. They succeeded in 1847 in depriving Edinburgh of a representative who conferred dignity on

the city, and was admired by the Senate and the country as a statesman, an orator, and an honest man.'

The wrong done was in due time repented and atoned for, but the blot on the escutcheon of Edinburgh can never be wiped out.

Mr. Black had intended to retire from office at the close of this year, but a largely signed requisition induced him to continue Provost for another year. The year that followed was distinguished throughout Europe as the year of Revolutions. The earthquake that shook so many thrones on the other side of the English Channel was felt in Great Britain too, but only in the form of tremors and rumblings. There was much discontent, and much suffering among the working classes, but the discontent took scarcely any form more dangerous than that of great open air meetings and vehement speeches by Chartist orators. Numbers of British workmen had been peremptorily expelled from France by her new masters, without time to take their money out of the Savings Banks, or even to collect their tools. There had not for many years been so many people out of work, and in utter destitution, especially in the great towns. In Edinburgh the powers of the authorities and the liberality of the benevolent were taxed to the utmost to preserve order, and provide the means of existence for thousands of starving and clamorous people. Employment was found for as many as possible in

breaking stones and other work about the Meadows and the Calton Hill, but the cry was still for food or money, and large crowds met at these places, and listened to exciting harangues from sympathetic orators. At one of these meetings on the Calton Hill, said to have been attended by 20,000 people, it was resolved to go in a body to the Lord Provost, and present a memorial to the Town Council, setting forth their grievances. After the meeting broke up, the multitude poured down from the Calton Hill to Drummond Place, which they completely filled. The inhabitants of that quiet square were not a little alarmed at such a formidable demonstration, and closed the shutters of their windows. A deputation, headed by Mr. Robert Cranston, now a Bailie of Edinburgh, came to No. 38, and informed the Lord Provost that their chairman, being a little man, had been lost in the crowd, but that the memorial, which had been entrusted to him, would be duly presented to the Town Council, and that they hoped his lordship would support it. Mr. Black assured them that their memorial would receive full consideration; that, as he had not seen it, he could say no more, but that he rather suspected he should have to oppose it. The deputation then withdrew, and the crowd quietly dispersed. The memorial was afterwards presented by the lost chairman, and a resolution in support of it, though not going so far as the memorialists desired, was met by the Provost

with an amendment, which was carried by twenty-two to eight.

Some days after this another great meeting was held on the Calton Hill. Mr. Black, anticipating another visit, repaired to the Council Chambers, and ordered a body of police to be in readiness in case of a disturbance in the streets. As he expected, the mob came up the North Bridge from the meeting, and learning that the Provost was at the Council Rooms, marched up the High Street, and filled the Royal Exchange Square. The Provost having sent notice to them that if they had any representation to make they should send a small deputation to the Council room, they did so. Their principal complaint was that they were in want of work, and starving. The Provost assured them that the magistrates were fully alive to their distress, and were doing all they could to alleviate it; that if any attempt were made to disturb the public peace, the authorities were prepared to protect the inhabitants; but that it was earnestly hoped there would be no occasion to use force. Among other precautions that had been taken, a large body of special constables had been sworn in, who were called out one evening about this time, but fortunately had no occasion to use their batons. The deputation listened respectfully to the Provost, and reported to their constituents in the Square, and the crowd quietly dispersed. The Provost was generally thought to have

managed this matter very well; but to his astonishment he received a letter from the Lord Advocate (Rutherfurd) condemning him for permitting the mob to approach the Council Chamber.[1]

In November of this year Mr. Black retired from the Provostship, after having filled the office with great acceptance for five years. He sat in the Town Council altogether eleven years, as Treasurer from 1833 to 1836, as a Councillor from 1840 to 1843, and as Provost from 1843 to 1848.

The chief addition made during his Provostship to

[1] On this occasion the Sheriff (Speirs) called out the military, and read the Riot Act. The pensioners met in the square of the Royal Exchange, and afterwards paraded the streets, but the officer in command refused to act unless the Provost accompanied him. In this somewhat unenviable position he marched with them through the streets, and the mob was dispersed without injury. Later in the evening a detachment of dragoons came up from Piershill under orders from the Sheriff, and seeing crowds in the North Bridge and High Street, they charged and galloped up brandishing their swords, one of which cut off a man's nose, who unfortunately was peeping out of a close-head, and paid this penalty for his inquisitiveness. His wife applied to the Provost next day for a *solatium*, and received half a crown as the price of the nose, which she accepted very thankfully.

On another somewhat similar occasion Mr. Black showed ready resource in meeting an emergency. After a heavy fall of snow the students at the College took to snowballing the passengers in the street, and proceeding from horseplay to a more serious use of their arms, a dangerous riot commenced. The Provost was advised to call out the military, as the police were powerless. He declined, but at once ordered out the fire engines, and directed them to go round the College and come past it at full gallop. The cry of Fire was soon heard, the mob opened out to let the engines rush by, and instantly followed the brigade in their fruitless search after an imaginary conflagration.

the architecture of Edinburgh was the Corn Exchange, for which the city and all the farmers who do business there are indebted to him. Before that magnificent building was erected, the business for which it was designed was all done in the open air in circumstances of extreme inconvenience and discomfort. Mr. Black determined to put an end to this; and as the result of his exertions the dealers in agricultural produce were provided with ample accommodation, and the city with the largest hall hitherto built in it, which has been used since its erection for all the greatest meetings and banquets that have been held in Edinburgh.

At the last meeting of the Town Council at which he presided, on 2d November 1848, Mr. Black was presented with a full-length portrait of himself in his official robes, painted by the President of the Royal Scottish Academy, Sir John Watson Gordon. It was subscribed for by a number of his fellow-citizens, including some of his previous opponents, whom his conduct as Lord Provost had satisfied that the credit and welfare of the city, so far as dependent on the conduct of its affairs by its rulers, had never been more thoroughly upheld and promoted than during his tenure of the office. Lord Cockburn expressed this sentiment when, in writing his lively protest 'on the best ways of spoiling the beauties of Edinburgh,' he spoke of him as 'one of the very best and most justly respected chief magistrates that Edin-

burgh ever saw.' The prime elements of character to which this was due were his plain straightforwardness and strength of purpose, his freedom from self-regarding motives, and his strict impartiality. He neither sought for power nor craved popularity, neither feared criticism nor hesitated to give it when required.

As a just recognition of his public services the honour of knighthood was offered to him in the following letter from Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister:—

'*Private.* Richmond, *Nov.* 16, 1848.

'SIR—In consequence of the judgment, temper, and ability you have shown in the conduct of the municipal government of Edinburgh during a long period, and the general esteem in which you are held by your fellow-citizens, I shall advise the Queen to confer upon you the honour of knighthood. I wish, however, to ascertain that such a distinction will be acceptable to you before I proceed further.—I remain, sir, your faithful servant, J. RUSSELL.'

The family were sitting at breakfast when this letter came, and Mr. Black, having read it aloud, said he would now put it to the vote whether to reply Yes or No. The Noes carried it unanimously, and Mr. Black replied as follows:—

'Edinburgh, *Nov.* 21, 1848.

'MY LORD—I cannot sufficiently express my sense of the honour your lordship has done me in testify-

ing your approval of my conduct while Chief Magistrate of this city, especially as this is accompanied with the kind offer to recommend to Her Majesty to confer on me a distinction which I should gladly accept and highly value, did it comport with my circumstances. But after seriously considering the case I came to the conclusion that, highly gratifying as it is to myself, gratifying as it most probably will be to my fellow-citizens that such distinction has been offered to their Chief Magistrate by your lordship, they will agree with me that it is more appropriate that I should retain the status of an untitled citizen among them.

'With sentiments of unfeigned gratitude,—I have the honour to be, my lord, etc., A. B.

'The Right Hon. Lord John Russell.'

'I have never regretted,' says Mr. Black, 'the decision we came to. To me the title would only have been an encumbrance; my wife had no desire to be called "My Lady," and it would only have fostered vanity in my children.'

During his term of office Mr. Black's time was necessarily much occupied by his public duties; but he was fortunate in having as his partner in business his able and accomplished nephew Charles. He now resumed his old work as before. 'I sat down at my desk,' he says, 'as if I had never left it. The past appeared but as a dream.'

CHAPTER V.

1849-1856.

MR. BLACK was now relieved from public business, and had reached an age when men generally are supposed to be entitled to a life of comparative leisure. It seemed very unlikely, and no one probably thought so more than himself, that some of the most active years of his life, and in a sphere of public duty he had never aspired to, were still before him, and to begin, after he had fairly passed the ordinary bound of human life.

For a few years after this he occupied himself mainly with his own business, though continuing to take, as before, an active part in such public matters as had a special claim on his time. In April 1851 he made the most important addition to the business of his firm that he had ventured on since he became proprietor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by purchasing from Robert Cadell's trustees the remaining copyrights of Sir Walter Scott's works. The name of A. and C. Black had stood for a long time on the

title-page of the *Edinburgh Review* (though they never had any share in the property) where that of A. Constable and Co. once stood; so that now the one firm occupied the place of the other, as regarded the three chief undertakings which had so specially done honour and good to Edinburgh as a seat of intellectual influence and of printing and publishing business. To be proprietors and publishers of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the works of Sir Walter Scott might well be considered a sufficient honour and occupation for any firm.[1]

[1] Messrs. Black removed in 1851 from No. 27 to No. 6 North Bridge, where they had the advantage of more room, though in a less cheerful situation. No. 27 is the corner shop on the S.W. side of the North Bridge, and commands, from various points, a clear view of the Mound, Princes Street, and the Calton Hill. No. 6 is near the S.E. corner of North Bridge Street, where it abuts on the High Street, and behind it is Halkerston's Wynd, at one time the most disreputable of all the High Street closes, a dangerous passage even in daylight. Mr. Black had for some years been buying up property in this quarter, as opportunity offered, with a view to extending his premises backwards from the North Bridge, and ultimately succeeded in buying up the whole of Halkerston's Wynd. This involved transactions with a great number of proprietors, sometimes difficult to discover, and not less to deal with. After he bought the houses, he did not venture to go and examine them;—as for rent, it would have been dangerous to ask it. When it became necessary at last to commence building operations, Mr. Black was at a loss how to get rid of his tenants, most of whom occupied one or two rooms, and were supposed to pay weekly. He knew that formal warning would be useless, unless followed by eviction, and he was unwilling to use harsh measures. He accordingly offered to give each of them half a crown if they would 'flit and remove' before a certain day. They all took the half-crown, and agreed to remove; but instead

In the summer of this year Mr. and Mrs. Black visited the Great Exhibition, memorable as the first of its kind, and, to those who saw it, never equalled in interest by any of the greater ones that followed it. Later in the season they spent some time with their family at Ashton, on the Clyde. Their principal amusement consisted in visiting the various interesting and delightful places to be seen 'doon the watter.' Among others, they landed one day at Tighnabruaich in the Kyles of Bute, and were so taken by the charms of the situation that they thought no place could be more desirable as a summer retreat. Mr. Black took a feu there of about two acres, on which he built a pretty cottage, which for eight years was a pleasant holiday home for him and his family, and is associated in their minds, and those of friends who visited them, with many happy recollections.

In the course of this year, also, preparations began to be made for a new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* but the work was not fairly begun till the following year. Nine years had elapsed since the

of their doing so, Mr. Black found that on the appointed day the rooms were apparently fuller than before. With the help of the police, he at last got these noisome dens cleared out without violence. One poor man pleaded hard to be allowed to remain till the end of the month, as his wife had just gone to jail for that time, and wouldn't know where to find him when she came out, if he were removed. His request was granted.

Among the tenements thus acquired and still preserved, was one of literary interest, the house No. 165 High Street, at one time occupied by Allan Ramsay, where he both did business as barber and sold his poems in broadsheets.

completion of the seventh edition, and much of the scientific and historical contents had become already antiquated or imperfect. The whole, however, had been stereotyped, and many of the plates, maps, and steel engravings were still available. Paper and printing were also much cheaper than they had been, so that the cost of this edition and its selling price were much reduced.

The editor chosen for the eighth edition was Dr. Thomas Stewart Traill, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the University of Edinburgh, a man of extensive and varied knowledge. His decided Liberal principles, which he professed more publicly than is generally done by academic officials, brought him naturally into intimate relations with Mr. Black, in whose back-shop he was almost a daily visitor on his way to or from the University. He was also a man of agreeable and obliging disposition, and Mr. Black rightly thought that he could not have a better editor for the *Encyclopædia*. Mr. Black reserved to himself this time more of the practical control of the work than he had done with Mr. Napier, and was resolved, among other things, that the work should be done more economically. This led to a great saving of the stereotype plates, with results, however, not conducive to the perfection of the work, and sometimes very trying to the contributors or sub-editors, when they were informed on a proof-sheet that they had 'seventy-nine lines to strike out,' or 'forty-two lines

to fill in,' after having already exercised all their skill in putting the necessary information into the most moderate compass compatible with due proportion and literary art. In this respect the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia*, now in course of publication, is immensely superior to the eighth or any preceding edition. The stereotype plates having been wholly thrown aside: the book, which may be regarded as the most complete repertory of human knowledge ever compiled, is to all intents and purposes a new one.

In the preparation of the eighth edition Mr. Black, guided by his experience of the seventh edition, thought it well to have several competent hands working on the premises on the bulk of the smaller articles, and he was not disappointed. 'Sometimes,' he says, 'we had three or four working at once in our rooms, and with these young gentlemen we had the publication much more comfortably managed than with a dictatorial editor.' Among the first of these was Mr. Thomas Stewart Traill, son of the Professor, an amiable and accomplished young man, who assisted in the work for several years, but died, as his father also did, before the edition was completed. Mr. David Kay, who was specially engaged for the geographical and statistical department of the *Encyclopædia*, worked at it from the beginning to the completion of the edition, with unfailing care and conscientiousness. Among the other assistants or sub-editors who worked on the premises for periods

of varying length were the present writer; Mr. James Carmichael, now of the Edinburgh Academy; Dr. David Pryde, now Head Master of the Edinburgh Ladies' College; Mr. Richard Waterston, now a minister of the Free Church in Dundee; Mr. Peter Macpherson, M.A.; Mr. James Candlish, son of the eminent Dr. Candlish, himself now D.D. and a Professor in the Free Church College, Glasgow; Mr. William H. Chalmers, afterwards Assistant Librarian in the Advocates' Library, and since dead, a man of considerable power and quaint originality. Last, but not least, was John Downes—for several years, and especially after Professor Traill's death, the real editor of the *Encyclopædia*. A few words of special tribute are due to his memory. A native of Portpatrick in Wigtownshire, of humble birth, he was one of those exemplary specimens of Scottish character and accomplishments, developed under great difficulties, which do honour to their native country. Big in body and in mind, combining strength and sweetness, courage and modesty, great knowledge for his years, and perfect humility, he died at the age of thirty-seven, leaving the sad but proud feeling with those who knew him, that Scotland and the world had lost a man who, if he had lived, would have upheld his country's reputation, and made his own place as a leader in the world of thought. He was specially distinguished as a student in Philosophy, and contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,

besides innumerable smaller articles, 'Pantheism,' 'Scepticism,' and 'Spinoza,' which were rightly characterised by Dr. John Brown, who valued him much, as 'models of strong, judicious, original, and unpretending thought.'

On the dissolution of Parliament in 1852, Sir William Gibson-Craig, who had been one of the representatives of Edinburgh since 1847, refused to be nominated again. The first person whom the Liberal Committee thought of as his successor was Lord John Russell, and Mr. Black was commissioned to inform him that if he chose to be nominated there could be no doubt of his election. Lord John highly appreciated this mark of confidence, and declined the offer only on learning that he was to be nominated as one of the candidates for the City of London, which had a prior claim on his services. It was now suggested that the constituency of Edinburgh should make atonement for the injustice done to Mr. Macaulay in 1847 by electing him again, and the first person who expressed this idea to Mr. Black was one of Macaulay's most vigorous opponents on the former occasion, Mr. Peter Howden. Finding the proposal generally acceptable, Mr. Black brought it forward in the Liberal Committee, which heartily adopted it. Mr. Macaulay very naturally declined to appear as a candidate; but the Committee resolved, notwithstanding, to bring him forward on their own responsibility, and to relieve him from all the trouble and

expense of a contest. Six candidates were nominated, and the contest was very keen. The new candidates were Mr. Duncan M'Laren, then Lord Provost of Edinburgh (Liberal); the Hon. T. C. Bruce, brother of the Earl of Elgin (Conservative); Mr. Campbell of Monzie (Independent); and Professor Dick, of the Edinburgh Veterinary College (Radical). Mr. Charles Cowan (Liberal), stood again, and was supported as before by the greater part of the various sections which combined in 1847 to put him in place of Macaulay. Macaulay had the support of the old Whig party, and of a large proportion of the more educated citizens, who wished, irrespectively of politics, to wipe off the reproach which the electors had brought on the city by rejecting five years before a man of gifts so brilliant and of honesty so pure.[1]

Mr. Bruce was supported only by the Conservatives, who have never since 1832 been able to win a seat in Edinburgh. On this occasion they made a respectable appearance on the polling-day.

Mr. M'Laren had been one of the earliest and most constant advocates of Reform and Free Trade, and had specially distinguished himself in the administration of the affairs of the city by his services as

[1] Among these the most striking and interesting example was given by Professor Wilson, who, though in failing health at this time, living in the country, at some distance from Edinburgh, came in on the polling-day expressly to vote for Macaulay, who greatly appreciated the compliment.

Treasurer, and by the establishment of the outdoor Heriot Free Schools. He had consequently a large support among his fellow-citizens, especially from those of more advanced views, who afterwards called themselves the Citizen Party.

Campbell of Monzie came forward as the representative of true blue Scottish Protestantism and Presbyterianism, and received some support from the more fervid or fanatical portion of the Free Church, who were pleased by his rousing but somewhat extravagant eloquence.

Professor Dick came forward as the representative of genuine Radicalism, but received so little encouragement that he did not proceed to the poll.

Each of the candidates stood by himself, on his own merits, and the ultimate struggle was between M'Laren and Cowan. Had they been each dependent on their natural supporters, M'Laren would have been successful. But the Tories thought Cowan the less objectionable of the two, and came to his help about the middle of the election day, raising him from the third to the second place on the poll. Mr. M'Laren afterwards blamed Mr. Black for having caused his defeat, by advising the Roman Catholics to plump for Macaulay, instead of splitting their votes between Macaulay and him. Mr. Black's account of this, however, is that the Roman Catholics intended to plump for Macaulay before they came to ask his advice, when solicited to split their votes

with M'Laren: and that he, as chairman of Macaulay's committee, could not afford to risk the chance of his being second on the poll, perhaps even third. He accordingly advised them to adhere to their original intention.

On the polling day Macaulay took the lead from the first, and at the close the figures were:—

Macaulay . . .	1872
Cowan	1754
M'Laren	1546
Bruce	1066
Campbell . . .	626

Macaulay's expenses amounted to £906, which were paid by his supporters.

The death of his nephew Charles in 1854 deprived Mr. Black of a much-beloved and valuable partner, whose intellectual capacity, cultivated taste, and pleasing manners, greatly contributed to the success of the business. Mr. Black's sons were now of an age to take a useful part in the affairs of the firm. In the summer of the same year a proposal was made by some of his friends to do him honour in a form of the most unusual kind, as a tribute to his public and private merits, the erection, viz., of a statue in some suitable public place or building, such as the Corn Exchange. The committee formed to take charge of the matter appointed a deputation to wait on Mr. Black, and in reply to the letter of their

secretary, Mr. John Jopp, W.S., Mr. Black made the following characteristic reply :—

'*July* 10, 1854.

'DEAR SIR—I was quite overwhelmed with the extraordinary expression of the kindness of my good friends as conveyed to me in your letter of Saturday. As I read it I really thought it must have been intended for some other person, and misdirected to me, for I could not conceive of anything I had done that could merit such mark of approbation. If I have been of any service to the public, I have only done what it was my duty to do, and not more than others, and I have done nothing lately to call for particular notice. It is very gratifying to me to think that my fellow-citizens are generally satisfied with my public conduct, but I not only do not desire anything more than their esteem, which I greatly prize, but any public demonstration, or any substantial mark of it would be really painful to me; and if my friends will consult my happiness, I most sincerely and earnestly request that they will allow me to pursue the even tenor of my way without any public demonstration whatever.

'I consider that a statue ought not to be erected to any man while alive. I might do something very foolish or very wrong, and the statue would then stand as a monument of ridicule or reproach.

'As I would object to such a mark of approbation to any other man while alive, I would most decidedly object to it in my own case.' . . .

The year 1856, in which Mr. Black entered on his seventy-third year, unexpectedly proved the most important of his life, and ushered him into a new and higher sphere of public duty than he had ever dreamed of. Macaulay had written to him in January 1855, expressing his desire to retire from Parliament on account of the state of his health, which was so delicate that he could not attend to his duties. It irked him to be 'titular member' only; and the question troubled his conscience. In April 1855 he again wrote to the same effect. 'I feel,' he said, 'every day more and more that my public life is over. . . . I see no chance of my being able again to take part in debate. . . . The little that I can do for mankind must be done at my desk.' The Edinburgh Liberal Committee urged him still to retain his seat, as a dissolution was near at hand, and repeated contests and canvassing were very objectionable. Macaulay, in deference to this feeling, held on for some time longer, but at length decided that he must retire, and on 19th January 1856 sent his valedictory address to the electors of Edinburgh. That interesting document contains the statement, creditable to the constituency which had formerly treated him so unworthily, 'From not one single elector have I ever received a line of reproach or complaint.' The Liberal Committee was now in a difficulty. There was no man of eminence to be got anywhere to fill the place of Macaulay. Looking at home, they

naturally thought of Sir Wm. Gibson-Craig, who had represented Edinburgh so well before; but he positively refused to be nominated again, and recommended the committee instead to choose their well-known and tried friend Adam Black. To Mr. Black the proposal was naturally startling, and he decidedly declined to offer himself, on very good grounds. He urged that he was too old, and not likely to make any figure in Parliament creditable to Edinburgh; that it would be injurious to his business to remove from Edinburgh; and that it would be very inconvenient and expensive, with or without a contest. These objections, however, were overruled by those who had taken most part in promoting Macaulay's election, and they were satisfied that if they were to choose a representative from their own citizens, the man above all others most fit and worthy to fill that place was Adam Black. To them, who knew his unusual vigour of body and mind, his age was no objection whatever. It was just the same as that of the most lively and influential man at that moment in Great Britain, Lord Palmerston. Mr. Black at length consented to stand, if he obtained some reasonable assurance that he would receive sufficient support. That assurance was soon given in the shape of a well and influentially signed requisition. And now Mr. Black's troubles began. There were at that time twelve newspapers published in Edinburgh, and of these only one supported him. Some of the rest reviled

him without measure; others depreciated him with decency; and some gave him the go-by without positive criticism. The one paper that supported him was the *Scotsman*, then edited by the brightest and ablest of all editors of his time, Alexander Russel, and more truly representing the best thought of Scotland and its capital than any or all of the other papers. The Tory interest was represented by the *Courant*, *Evening Post*, and *Advertiser*, all opposed to Adam Black, but with respectable moderation, excepting the *Post*. The Advanced Liberal or Radical interest was represented chiefly by the *Daily Express*, *Caledonian Mercury*, and *Edinburgh News*, which, each in their season, poured forth the most unmitigated abuse of the old man, whom they showed, in the clearest manner, to be the very incarnation of Whig exclusiveness, selfishness, irreligion, and jobbery. One other paper, deserving of special notice, showed no hostility to Mr. Black, but gave him no support. That was the *Witness*, the organ of the Free Church, edited by one of the few men of genius then to be found in Edinburgh, who knew as well as any man in Scotland the merits of Adam Black, but was bound by the exigencies of his position as the editor of an ecclesiastical organ to abstain from giving him any help. Hugh Miller, in one of his articles on the subject in the *Witness*, thus classified the parties at that time existing in Edinburgh:—

1. The *Edinburgh Review* Whig party.
2. The old Anti-*Edinburgh Review* Conservative party.
3. The Anti-Forbes-Mackenzie Act party.
4. The Pro-Forbes-Mackenzie, or Temperance party.
5. The Anti-Maynooth party.
6. The Pro-Maynooth (Cowgate Roman Catholic) party.
7. The John Hope (Roman Catholic Emancipation Act Repeal) party.
8. The Duncan M'Laren party.
9. The Modified Ecclesiastico-Political Free Church party.

He omitted, it seems, two additional parties—the Sabbatarian party, and the Society for Vindication of Scottish Rights. 'My supporters,' says Mr. Black, 'were drawn chiefly from the old Whig party. The Catholics naturally supported me for opposing the Anti-Maynooth party, and I had, I believe, a majority among the publicans; so that my strength lay among the Whigs, the publicans, and the Roman Catholic sinners. The other six parties combined against me.' From the upholders of the Established Church it was to be expected that Mr. Black should receive only opposition; but from the Dissenters, of whose principles he had been a conspicuous champion, he was well entitled to look for friendly support. On the contrary, many of his bitterest opponents were Dissenters, and, saddest of all, the life and soul of the opposition was his old friend and comrade in every great contest of the past, Duncan M'Laren. Mr. Black had let him know of his intention to offer him-

self as a candidate before he announced it publicly, and Mr. M'Laren had informed the chairman of his own former committee, in reply to an inquiry whether he could be induced to come forward again, that the resolution he had formed and communicated to his friends, nearly two years ago, against doing so was still unchanged. Mr. M'Laren, however, had made up his mind that his old friend Adam Black ought not to be member for Edinburgh; that he was too old —at any rate, too much of an Old Whig, not enough of an Advanced Liberal, or Independent Citizen. It was resolved, therefore, that he must be opposed at all hazards, and the old Whigs—the 'Parliament House clique,' the supposed inheritors of the *Edinburgh Review* principles—be made to know that their day was past, and that they must give place to new men and new ideas. With extraordinary industry and tact, Mr. M'Laren succeeded in combining together the most heterogeneous elements of Edinburgh politics in opposition to Mr. Black, and in support of a candidate little known in comparison, but having some kind of affinity with parties diametrically opposed to one another so far as concerned points which they ordinarily called 'principles.' That candidate was Mr. Brown-Douglas, a member of the Bar, a gentleman of unexceptionable character, but of very variable politics, of whom it was difficult to say whether he was Tory or Radical, or both. He had voted with the Tories formerly, but he was a Free Churchman, and

rather courted Radicalism now. On the Sabbath, Maynooth, and other religious questions, he was as 'sound' as the most severe Presbyterian Ultramontanist could desire. Thus Mr. M'Laren was able to bring together against his ancient comrade, in those strange fellowships for which Edinburgh elections in modern times were becoming notorious, high and dry Churchmen on the one side, blatant Dissenters on the other, fossil Tories, furious Radicals. There was a repetition, with increased bitterness, of the same coalition of sects and cliques that combined nine years before to unseat Macaulay. Nevertheless, it was not successful, and at the close of the poll the figures were—

Black	2429
Brown-Douglas . .	1786

Edinburgh was thus saved from the discredit of preferring a new and untried man to an old and eminent citizen, whose services to his native town were beyond dispute, and whose only serious defect, to unprejudiced eyes, was his age. He had just entered on his seventy-third year, and in ordinary cases it is unreasonable to expect any hard work of a man who has reached that venerable term. His ancient ally thought it right to predict that if he were sent to Parliament at that age, and did his duty in the House and on committees, he could not survive twelve months. 'Old Adam,' however, was made of stronger stuff than even his oldest friends imagined. He not

only did his duty in the House and on committees with marked ability, but for ten years was one of the best attenders in the House, not unfrequently sitting till long past midnight. He was never the worse of it, and he retired in 1865 in good health, at the age of 81.[1]

There had been no other instance before his time of a man past sixty going into Parliament and making any position there. Lord Palmerston was of the same age, and his vivacity and force continued unimpaired to the end of his long life. But he had entered Parliament young, and was at home there: the atmosphere of St. Stephen's was to him like his native air. How different was it to an old citizen of Edinburgh, whose life had been chiefly spent in quiet business, whose chief arenas for the exercise of his speaking powers had been committee rooms on the North Bridge or High Street, or public meetings in the Council Chamber or Music Hall of Edinburgh. And yet Adam Black, by virtue of his downright manliness and honesty, good sense, fairness, accuracy of information, clearness of statement, made his mark in the House of Commons as a man worth listening to, whose word could be relied on, who never spoke

[1] His daughter writes on one occasion, referring to her father's accustomed morning walks in the park — 'notwithstanding his coming in at all hours of the night,' 'Yesterday about 8 p.m. he returned home in great glee, saying business was finished and his work over for the night. He always reminds me of a schoolboy on such occasions.'

of things with which he was not well acquainted,—a man, in fact, entitled to reverence as a senator in the true sense of the word. With the solid and prosaic virtues which command respect he combined cheerfulness and geniality, was pleasant to meet and speak to, ready to help and oblige. He thus became very soon a well-known and popular member of the House, respected alike by Whigs and Tories.

The unusual honour done to him on his introduction to the Speaker naturally attracted notice at the the time. He was introduced by Lord Palmerston and Mr. Ellice, two of the oldest and most venerated members of the House. No one had ever seen the Prime Minister pay that compliment to any one before. It was a compliment well deserved, and peculiarly appropriate, doing honour to the man and to the city he represented, where the Premier, in his youthful days, got some of his best political education and ideas, to the benefit of the British Empire.

Mr. Black says, in reference to this incident, 'I don't know how it happened. I suppose some of my friends wished to do me extra honour, and so arranged it; but although it was, no doubt, an honour, I afterwards rather regretted it, as it had the appearance of giving the minister a claim upon my vote.'

CHAPTER VI.

1856–1865.

ON the Sunday after his arrival in London Mr. Black went to the chapel where he used to worship more than fifty years before. He found the chapel enlarged but the congregation diminished, and the minister not to be compared to Dr. Burder. He could not recognise one known face: the whole generation he had known there had gone to their fathers. 'I reflected,' he says, 'on all the distinguishing and unmerited goodness the Lord had shown me since those days of humiliation, and though the sermon was much inferior to those I used to hear, it was good to meditate on the circumstances of the time and place.'

At first he lived in Morley's Hotel, and while there he received a good deal of attention from the collectors of subscriptions, who soon find out new Members of Parliament, and sometimes suit their representations to the locality from which the member comes. One day a respectable-looking man came with a subscription list for a poor Scotch widow, said

to belong to Edinburgh. The list was headed by a vicar, £5 : 5s.; churchwardens and other dignitaries, various sums. 'I was hesitating,' says Mr. Black, 'whether I would get off for £2 : 2s., when my visitor, in order to inflame my generosity, said, "All her relations voted for you." I replied to him, "How do you or she know how her relations voted? I see you are an impostor: I will give you nothing," upon which he made a hasty retreat.'

Shortly after this he moved into private apartments in Parliament Street, and early in April he had the pleasure of there receiving his wife, and one of his daughters, who continued with him till the close of the session.

Mr. Black was not a frequent speaker in the House, and his speeches were generally short. He always confined himself to questions with which he was well acquainted, and in which his constituents took special interest, such as National Education, the Maynooth Grant, the Annuity Tax, and Parliamentary Reform. He made his first speech, consisting of a few sentences, on 19th February, in support of Mr. Fagan's motion for the abolition of the Ministers' Money Tax in Ireland. He informed the House that a similar odious tax was levied in Edinburgh and Montrose, under the name of the Annuity Tax, and he trusted that if the Irish one were repealed, the same justice would be extended to Scotland. He spoke again on 12th March in support of the second

reading of the Scottish Reformatory Schools Bill, and referred to the Edinburgh United Industrial School as having completely demonstrated the imaginary character of the supposed 'religious difficulty.' Soon after he spoke in support of two bills brought in by the Lord Advocate (Moncreiff) for the improvement of the parochial school system of Scotland. He expressed his regret, not without reason, that a more comprehensive measure could not be offered, while accepting the proposed measures as steps in the right direction.

When Mr. Spooner's annual motion for the withdrawal of the Maynooth Grant came on, Mr. Black moved an amendment, in the shape of an addition to the motion, in these words:—'And at the same time to take into consideration the other Parliamentary grants made to religious denominations in Ireland, with a view to their withdrawal.' In the course of his speech he gave a calculation of the amount of public money distributed among the various denominations of Christians in Ireland, in proportion to their respective numbers, and showed that each family belonging to the Established Church, embracing 10·75 per cent of the population, received annually £5 : 8s.; each Presbyterian family, representing 8 per cent of the population, 6s. 11d.; and each Roman Catholic family, representing 81 per cent, 8¾d. 'I ask,' he said, 'if there is a single gentleman in this House who will say that this is a just and equal apportion-

ment of money from the common stock? Don't imagine that I am advocating an equal division of the public money according to the numerical proportion of the inhabitants of Ireland. Far from it; and when the question of the National Church of Ireland comes to be considered, I am quite prepared to deal with it also on the principles of justice, sound policy, and true religion.'

These views, propounded by Mr. Black on 15th April 1856 to very few sympathising ears, were nearly identical with those affirmed in a full House by a large majority in less than eleven years from that date. His amendment was seconded by another wise and respected senator, Edward Ellice, but the resulting vote was a crushing disappointment. Mr. Black and Mr. Ellice had the select following of 21 Ayes against 253 Noes. He was very indignant, and much amazed, believing that the mode in which his amendment had been presented and supported was neither weak nor injudicious, and that there were certainly more than 21 honest and equitable men in the House. 'As I was returning to my seat,' he says, 'quite discomfited, Sir James Graham in passing said to me, "Don't be discouraged; you will be more successful the next time."' Sir James, notwithstanding this consoling speech, had not considered it his duty to help the minority; the time had not yet come. 'I never understood,' says Mr. Black, 'why the English Nonconformists and the Scotch Dissenters should all

have voted against me; whether it was because I did not previously consult them, or because I was "too new a member to presume to take up so important a question."' He gives the names of the faithful few who supported him—Ellice, Byng (Hon. G. H.), Craufurd (E. H. J.), Dillwyn, Fergus, Forster (C.), Gardner, Grenfell, Hindley, Jackson (W.), Laing, Martin (P. W.), Phillimore (J. G.), Pigott, Pilkington, Price (W. P.), Ricardo, Scobell, Stanley (Hon. W. O.), Strutt, Whatman, Williams. The only Scotch members who voted with him were Craufurd, Fergus, and Laing. On the other side were found such eminent Voluntaries as Miall, Hadfield, Crossley, Cheetham, Kershaw, Pellatt; and of Scottish members, the Lord Advocate and Mr. W. E. Baxter.

'The vote,' said the *Scotsman*, 'might until the other day have been deemed not credible,—but in things ecclesiastical, people must now learn to be astonished at nothing.'

Such votes afford an unpleasant illustration of the extent to which considerations of expediency and party policy override mere 'principles' and 'beliefs,' or the things that pass for such among politicians.

Mr. Black spoke several times again in that session, —never at any length, but only on questions to which he had given much consideration, and on which he had made up his mind. Of these the two chief were Education and Parliamentary Reform.

His views on national education were exemplarily sensible and liberal. He recognised the value and services of the parochial schools; but he knew how inadequate they were to meet the wants of the country, how unsatisfactorily they were often taught, how difficult it was to remove an incompetent or ill-behaved man, how hollow and vicious was the provision, in the interests of religion, that the teachers should be members of the Established Church. The supposed 'religious difficulty,' which up to 1872 had constituted the standing obstruction to a system of national education, had never been recognised by him as anything but an ecclesiastical spectre or 'bogie,' with no substantial reality. As a Sabbath-school teacher he had found no difficulty in communicating religious instruction to children nominally connected with various denominations. As a parent he would not have hesitated, he once said to his constituents, in sending his children to a school presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in preference to one conducted by a Congregational minister, if he thought the education was better in the Episcopal school.

On the subject of Parliamentary Reform, Mr. Black's views were those of a good old Whig, who, though he had fought for it in days when to do so was dangerous, had become afraid of further extending the franchise to that portion of the community, which was greatest in numbers, but in his opinion less competent than the better educated to

exercise it wisely. He was also of opinion that a £10 rental formed a fair and reasonable criterion of a citizen's stake in the welfare of his country. His views on this great question will be referred to and given in extracts from his speeches further on.

Parliament was prorogued on 26th July, and Mr. Black's last act of the session was to second Mr. Gladstone's motion for removal of disabilities of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The next session was an eventful one. Parliament met on 3d February 1857, and on 3d March, after a debate of four nights, Lord Palmerston was defeated by 265 to 249, on the question whether hostilities commenced in China, without express instructions from Government, in vindication of the honour of the British flag, were justifiable. The vote of censure was moved by Mr. Cobden, and supported by Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir James Graham. The majority was made up of 198 Conservatives, 35 Liberals, 22 Peelites, and 10 Irish. On the other side were 228 Liberals and 21 Conservatives. Mr. Black voted with the Government, but did not speak.

The Government appealed to the country, and Lord Palmerston found himself again supported by a majority. Mr. Black and Mr. Cowan were returned again for Edinburgh without opposition.

There is no record of his private life during the rest of this year, but two important Parliamentary

measures occupied much of his attention during the next session.

In February 1858 the Palmerston Government was unexpectedly broken up by an adverse vote on the Conspiracy Bill, introduced by Lord Palmerston for the purpose of more effectually suppressing conspiracies in England against the lives of foreign potentates, and of the French Emperor in particular. The first reading of the Bill was carried, on 9th February, by 299 to 99, against an amendment moved by Mr. Kinglake. An amendment to the same effect, but more dexterously drawn, by Mr. Milner Gibson, was carried against the second reading by 234 to 215, and next day, 19th February, the Ministry resigned.

Mr. Black was much perplexed, like many others, what course to pursue on this question, not having been present at the first debate. It seemed to him reasonable that due protection should be afforded to friendly powers against such atrocious designs as those which gave rise to the proposed amendment of our law. But nothing is more repugnant to the British mind than an alteration of the law of the land in deference to the wishes of a foreign power. The suggestion in this case had come undisguisedly from Count Walewski, the French ambassador, and the outcry that was raised against what was called cowardly truckling to the 'Man of 2 December' was thoroughly characteristic of the nation. Mr. Black

was moved by the popular feeling, and felt unable to resist it. 'I was desirous,' he says, 'to support Ministers, but I could not make up my mind to appear to be dictated to by a foreign power, and therefore I did what I hardly ever did before—I refrained from voting. I afterwards regretted that I did not support the Ministry; and next day I met several who had voted against them, and thus were instrumental in breaking up the Government, who, if they had known what was to be the result, would have voted the other way.'

The two measures previously referred to were, the Scottish Universities Bill, introduced by the new Lord Advocate, Inglis, and the Annuity Tax Bill, introduced by Mr. Black. The Universities Bill was framed with great care, and was carried through all its stages with masterly skill and decision. One of the fundamental provisions of the Bill was the entire deprivation of the Town Council of Edinburgh of their ancient right to manage the affairs of the University, and exercise the patronage of nearly all its chairs, and against this tremendous change Mr. Black felt bound to fight to the uttermost. He knew by experience what absurdities could be committed by the unnecessary tampering of ignorant persons with academic matters, but he knew also how much the prosperity of the University was due to the judicious and enlightened interest taken in its affairs by the Town Council; what a valuable counter-

poise it had been to the natural tendency of uncontrolled academic elements to trades'-unionism and conceited selfishness; how well, and even nobly, the municipality of Edinburgh had discharged the great trust committed to them by the patriotic founders of the University. But it was difficult for an old Edinburgh provost to convince English members, in opposition to a skilful advocate, himself an Oxon. M.A., that a Town Council, composed chiefly of tradesmen, could possibly administer the affairs, or with any discretion wield the patronage of an ancient University. He could tell them, without exaggeration, that the finances of the University were well and wisely managed, and that the patronage of the Council had, on the whole, been more unexceptionably and successfully exercised than that of the Crown or the Senatus Academicus; but all in vain. He divided the House on the question again and again, but always with a result as miserable as in the case of Maynooth. There had hitherto been no suggestion of compromise, and when the Bill reached the stage when the question of the patronage of the University had to be conclusively settled, Mr. Black made a final stand, and adopted one of those parliamentary expedients for obstruction which have of late years been so scandalously abused. It was one of those days when the Speaker leaves the chair at 6 P.M., whatever may be the business before the House. Mr. Black saw that the hour was approaching, and,

contrary to his usual brevity and moderation, went on talking, in the midst of a perfect storm of 'Hear! hear! —Time! time!' and every kind of disturbing noise, till at last the Speaker stepped down from the chair, the sitting was over, and the question still undecided.

Before the Bill came again before the House Mr. Black negotiated with the Ministry, through Sir William Dunbar, to have the University patronage committed to seven Curators, of whom four should be appointed by the Town Council. Mr. Black agreed to this compromise, as the best he could expect. He said he considered it hard to be deprived of any part of what legitimately belonged to the city, but he felt like the captain of a ship in a storm, in danger of being wrecked, and willing to throw some of the cargo overboard to save the ship. This compromise was considered a fair one, and the Curators of the University of Edinburgh, whose function was assigned in the other three Scottish Universities to the University Court, have, since the passing of the Act, discharged their duty, on the whole, to the satisfaction of the public.

The other subject which occupied most of his time and attention this session was the Edinburgh Annuity Tax, which had harassed the city for years before Mr. Black took part in public affairs, and had been a chronic source of strife, irritation, and disturbance. It was originally an impost of six per cent on the rental of all houses within the burgh of Edinburgh,

for behoof of the ministers of the Established Church in the city. A full and distinct history of the tax, now, fortunately, matter of curiosity more than of interest, is given in the speech of Mr. Black on the second reading of his Bill. Repeated attempts had been made to get rid of this repulsive tax, which became more and more intolerable as the Established Church decreased in popularity and usefulness. Time after time, bills for its abolition or gradual extinction had been brought into Parliament, none of which had hitherto met with any general acceptance. Mr. Black turned his attention seriously to the subject in the course of 1857-58, and devised a plan for the abolition of the tax, upon principles different from those of any of the previous bills. He took especial care to avoid coming on the public funds for any assistance, which had been a feature in all the previous bills, and an insuperable obstacle to their success.

Mr. Black moved the second reading of his Bill on 6th July 1858, in the longest speech he ever made in the House of Commons, which he afterwards published as a pamphlet. He treated the most 'burning question' of the day in Edinburgh with remarkable fairness and moderation, and was seconded by Mr. Baxter, whose constituents in Montrose laboured under a similar burden. On the same side spoke J. B. Smith, Cowan, Gilpin, and Sir T. E. Colebrooke; on the other side the Hon. F. Scott, Cumming-Bruce, and the Lord Advocate. The vote was a surprising success, Mr.

Black having 129 ayes on his side, against the bare majority of 130 noes.

No other approach to success had ever been attained on this question, and this vote gave great satisfaction in Edinburgh. The votes in the following year, when Mr. Black re-introduced his Bill, were more decisive, the numbers being—on the second reading, 216 in favour of the Bill, 176 against; and on the third reading, 21st July 1859, 162 ayes, 108 noes. The Bill, however, never reached the House of Lords, where it would certainly have been despatched without mercy.

Among the questions on which Mr. Black held views offensive to many of his constituents was that of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. He uniformly voted in favour of the legalisation of such marriages, to which most Scotch members have been opposed.

After a debate of seven nights on the second reading of the Derby-Disraeli Reform Bill, the Ministry were defeated on 31st March 1859, by 330 to 291, and appealed to the country. 'Of the Scotch members,' says Mr. Black, 'there voted in the majority 35, in the minority 18: none were absent. Of the Irish members there voted for ministers 55, for Lord John Russell's resolutions 40. It thus appears that the 53 Scotch members furnished one half of the majority; but the Scotch Whigs were balanced by the Irish Tories.'

About this time, he says elsewhere, 'I dined with Lord John Russell, and met Baron Rothschild, Roebuck, Byng, Sir E. Perry, Forster, Sir W. Dunbar, Baxter, etc. There was some talk about the Derby-Disraeli Reform Bill, but the conversation was constrained and dull. Lord John is distant in his manner, and I don't believe he ever perpetrated a joke, unless his reference to the inscription on the stone at Glencroe can be called one, when he recommended the nation to pause in its progress, to "rest and be thankful." Rothschild is stoutish, thoughtful, and quiet—one could imagine that he was all the time calculating his per cents, his millions, his loans—his appearance is the Jew all over. Roebuck is a little snarling creature, walks feebly, and seems to have a bad digestion. Nothing seems to delight him like having a good worry at some one. I have no doubt that in company he is a check on conversation, as one cannot be sure that he will not flare up at something. He is supposed to have a personal antipathy to Palmerston. As a member of Parliament he was useful. His cynical observations only made him be more attentively listened to. His honest denunciation of the atrocities of the trades unions in Sheffield cost him his seat there at the last election.'

Soon after the dissolution of Parliament Mr. Black returned to Edinburgh, and along with Mr. Moncreiff offered himself for re-election. On 20th April they addressed the constituency in the Music Hall. In

the course of an excellent speech Mr. Black made the following sensible remarks on party government:—

'It is one of the reproaches brought against the Liberal party, and not unjustly, that they are a rope of sand—they have no cohesion. With this they were taunted again and again from the Ministerial benches. The fact is, we are too independent; every man must follow his own individual notions. The Tory party are a compact, well-disciplined army. We are made up of different clans and volunteers, every one thinking he has a right to fight for his own hand, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other. The consequence is, although we are the majority, we are generally beaten, just as a disjointed army, especially if under discordant leaders, is sure to be discomfited by well-disciplined troops, under leaders acting in concert. There is often a clamour against party men, but, gentlemen, let me tell you there is a large and a powerful party against you, and unless you can form a party larger and more powerful, you must submit to their rule. It is not the members of Parliament who are alone to blame for this disorderly state of your troops; the constituencies are not altogether guiltless. They sometimes speak slightingly or reproachfully against a member because he joins with others of similar sentiments, who are generally acting under the same leaders. They taunt him with being a party man. Gentlemen, I make bold to say that I am as independent as any man in the House of Commons, or any man in this room, but I consider it my duty to act in all great questions with that party who are the supporters of Liberal measures, and I will act under any leader who secures the confidence of that party, and in so doing I am convinced I shall promote the best interests of the country. Do you ask me why there should be any parties at all, and what grounds there are for any contest?

I apprehend there is something in our natural constitution that will always give cause for party feeling. You see it in all free States, and the freer the State the keener the party feeling.'

He went on to speak of Toleration:—

'In the words of one of the greatest philosophers and sincerest Christians that England has produced, John Locke, I entirely agree when he says:—"No private person has any right, in any manner, to prejudice another person in his civil enjoyments because he is of another Church or religion. All the rights and franchises that belong to him as a man or as a denizen are inviolably to be preserved to him. . . . If we may openly speak the truth, and as becomes one man to another, neither Pagan, nor Mahometan, nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the Commonwealth because of his religion. The Gospel commands no such thing. The Church, which judgeth not those that are without, wants it not. And the Commonwealth, which embraces indifferently all men that are honest, peaceable, and industrious, requires it not." In the last conversation I had with that great divine and estimable man, the late Dr. John Brown, on his deathbed, he referred to these expressions of Locke, and his angelic countenance brightened up as he recommended me to maintain them in the House of Commons (applause). Well, then, with John Locke and the late Dr. Brown, I agree that every man who discharges the duties of a good citizen, whether he be Papist or Protestant, Jew or Gentile, Mahometan or Hindoo, is entitled to the same civil privileges, and the State has no right to give a preference to one man over another, or to lay a burden upon one man rather than another because he thinks differently from you on some religious question.'

He next went on to refer to Parliamentary Reform, in

the course of which he made some remarks on the extension of the franchise to the working-classes, which gave considerable offence to those of them and their professed friends who prefer to hear nothing but unqualified admiration. Mr. Black's outspoken honesty, on this and other occasions, in telling what he considered to be the truth to a class for whom he had great sympathy and respect, as became the son of a man whose mason's apron was his proper coat of arms, did the greatest honour to his character, and contrasted notably with the style in which it was and is customary for men to speak of them, whose chief aim is popularity. He said:—

'Nothing can be more certain than that free trade is most advantageous to workman and employer, and to the community at large; but I have had an opportunity of knowing that in some trades the tyranny and oppression which is exercised in favour of protection of trade is more cruel than what is exercised by throned despots. Gentlemen, I wish it to be understood that I do not mean anything offensive to the operatives; but I think I have here an opportunity of telling them a truth which I think will be useful; and I consider it to be the duty of men in the position in which I have the honour to be, not merely to say what will please this class or the other class, and if I have an opportunity of giving a good advice to any one I am prepared to do it. In the suicidal strikes which these unions give rise to, the workmen and their families are the great sufferers.'

In the course of that month, both members addressed the working men at a meeting called specially for the purpose in Brighton Street Chapel. Mr. Black, in

the course of his speech, thus gave his ideas on the subject of representative government in general, and the choice of parliamentary candidates :—

'What distinguishes representative government from despotism or oligarchy or pure democracy is, when rightly constructed, that it provides for a fair and proper attention to the interests of all classes and all parties. If any one class has a large preponderating influence, then we may expect that the regulations that should be made for the general benefit impartially will rather be made to favour the preponderating class ; hence the advantage of a diversified body of representatives. In the construction of this machine I acknowledge no other right but the right to make it as perfect for its purpose as possible, and that purpose is to produce the greatest amount of happiness to the greatest number. If it was to be injured by the admission of persons in my own position, I could have no right to object to being excluded, seeing that my admission would injuriously affect the right working of the system. I consider that it would be dangerous to be frequently making organic changes on our representative system, but it would also be dangerous to refuse to make those changes which altered times and altered circumstances call for. The present is one of those times when it is considered prudent that the elective franchise should be lowered and extended. Then comes a very difficult question, how far should this be extended ? always keeping in mind what I have stated to be the great object to be aimed at, the improvement of the representative machine. Now, I have shown that the claim of right cannot be sustained. The franchise is a duty imposed on certain individuals which they are bound to discharge faithfully for the good of the whole. It is not a right which they may exercise for their own benefit. . . . I don't dislike a man because he differs from me on some subjects—and in electing a repre-

sentative of a large community in which a great variety of opinions prevail, it is impossible he can coincide with them all—and let me tell you if you find a candidate agreeing with everybody, and promising to do his best to promote everything, and freely swallowing the pledges put to him, you should beware of that man. It is right to ascertain the opinions of candidates on public measures, and on matters in which we take a particular interest, but I consider it unreasonable to reject a candidate who agrees with you in the main on all great questions, because he differs from you on some isolated point, probably a crotchet. I have received intimation that no candidate should be supported who does not vote for the Maine Liquor Law; others, unless he will vote for the suppression of the trade in opium; others, against the grant to Maynooth; others, for the ballot, and a multitude of other things. Now it is all very well to elicit opinions on these subjects, but I should think it very unreasonable in you to insist that a candidate should swallow all these pledges, and I should have a poor opinion of the man who did.'

On 29th April Mr. Black and Mr. Moncreiff were re-elected without opposition.

Parliament met on 7th June, and after a debate of three nights, 'chiefly distinguished,' says Mr. Black, 'by the quantity of invective, sarcasm, and rancour voided by one member against another, raked out of the volumes of Hansard for the last twenty years,' the Derby-Disraeli Ministry were defeated by 323 to 310, and resigned. After an interval of ten days, Parliament reassembled, with Lord Palmerston as Premier, and Mr. Gladstone Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nothing remarkable took place during the

session, and soon after his return to Edinburgh, early in August, Mr. Black went down as usual for a short holiday to Tighnabruaich. Two letters to his son James while there are the only remaining records of this year. The references to the assessment for the Annuity Tax, payment of which was refused by his instructions, are amusing. In the first letter he says—

'I suppose we must let the law take its course. We cannot defend our conduct. The decision will go out; they will then, I suppose, demand payment under it; when, I suppose, we should pay. Or perhaps they will poind an Encyclopædia, which I would let them sell. They cannot put me in jail, but they may confer that honour upon you.

'I am improving the wet days by preparing my lecture on Combinations and Strikes.'

A few days later he wrote—

'I am sorry you should feel so annoyed about being put in jail. You should have more pluck. What harm would a few hours in jail do you? You could go the length of the jail door, and then pay, and you would be a martyr for life at small expense. I only wish they would try their hands upon me.'

On 24th January 1860 Parliament was opened by the Queen in person, and Mr. Black was in his place. On the 30th Lord Advocate Moncreiff introduced a Bill for the abolition of the Annuity Tax, differing considerably from that of Mr. Black, who, though much disappointed by it, agreed to give it fair con-

sideration, and recommended his constituents to do so. Without any communication with the Lord Advocate on the subject, he addressed a letter to them, stating with great fairness his objections to the Bill, and his reasons for accepting it, notwithstanding, as a measure capable of improvement, and of leading to a settlement of an exasperating question. His conduct in this matter did him the highest credit. He had attained a success in dealing with it which no one had done before, and he might have regarded the abolition of that odious tax as an achievement to which he had a special right. But no such personal considerations swayed his judgment in public matters, and at the risk of much obloquy and loss of popularity among a large section of his constituents, he gave place to his colleague on this question, and gave him such loyal support as he thought right. He concluded his letter thus :—

'Some will blame me for not adhering to the Bill, which met with so great an amount of favour among my fellow-citizens. I acknowledge I should have been proud of the honour of abolishing the Annuity Tax; but I cannot allow my private interests and partial affections to stand in the way of the public good. Others will say that I am willing to abandon a Bill which proceeds upon the Voluntary principle for one that is to support an Establishment; but Voluntary as I am, I have no right to permit my denominational views to interfere with the respon-

sible situation that I hold as representative of the city of Edinburgh, and not of any class or section. It is my desire, as well as my duty, to seek the peace and prosperity of the whole; and if a reasonable hope of a fair and equitable adjustment is held out, I should be sorry to give cause to any one afterwards to say that in 1860 we had a favourable opportunity for such a settlement, but it was lost through the folly or selfishness of your obedient servant,

'ADAM BLACK.'

On 3d February 1860 Mr. Gladstone made his Budget speech. Mr. Black says of it:

'The speech of the Chancellor was magnificent, and the interest of the members so intense, that though I went down to the House ten minutes before the hour, I could only get a seat in one of the back benches. Every part was crammed; the seats below the gallery allotted for the Peers, who were glad to get seated anywhere. Strangers waited from morning in the outer lobby, to secure places in the Strangers' Gallery, and the Speaker's Gallery was an object of intense desire. The wonder was, that a budget of figures could be made a subject of stirring eloquence. No doubt it had this element of pleasure, that it was known that a remission of some taxes was to be proposed, and there was great curiosity to know what they were to be. One extensive tea dealer, who had not been able to get a messenger into any part of the house, asked me as a great favour to come to him in

the lobby the moment the Chancellor had told what he was to do with tea, which I did. But before I could reach him, he had got his information and was off.

'What chiefly interests me was the repeal of the paper duty. I was asked by Sir Richard Malins, one of the opponents of the budget, how much we would reduce the price of the *Encyclopædia* now. "Not one penny," I said.

'Another feature of the budget speech, perhaps as interesting as the remission of taxes, was the treaty with France, which gave very general satisfaction.

'Mr. Gladstone spoke for four hours.

'After two nights' debate, on 20th and 21st February, the division was in favour of ministers by a majority of 116: 339 to 223. Thirty-seven Scotch members voted in the majority, and 8 in the minority. The House rose at 2·30 A.M., and I did not get to bed till between three and four.'

Mr. Black was a frequent guest at Lord Palmerston's parliamentary dinners, and tells an amusing incident in connection with them.

'The last time I dined there I told Lord Palmerston that he had brought one of the Irish members into trouble by inviting me, viz. Mr. Blake, M.P. for Waterford. He was Ultra-Irish, and one of the pledges he had given his constituents was, that he would never dine with Lord Palmerston. He came to me one day, and asked if I had dined with Lord Palmerston on Saturday. I said I had had that honour.

"Well," he said, "I have been roundly abused on your account, for the newspapers, in mentioning the guests, gave my name instead of yours." "What harm," I asked, "is there in dining with Lord Palmerston? If he invites you, you will be a fool if you don't accept." He said that, as for himself, he would be glad to dine with his Lordship, but for the abuse he would receive from his constituents. Curiously enough, he came to me a second time, and asked if I had been dining with Lord Palmerston on such a day, for he said, "You have again brought me into trouble with my constituents."

'But the most remarkable thing was that I afterwards received a note from him, enclosing a card of invitation from Lord Palmerston for me, which had been left at his lodgings. He said that, after this third affront, he was almost tempted to accept, and go in my place.'

Mr. Black was also an occasional guest of Mr. Mitchell of Stow, afterwards M.P. for Berwick, at whose house this season he met the historians Buckle and Kinglake. 'I knew Kinglake,' he says, 'from often sitting beside him in the House of Commons. He sometimes spoke on European questions, and was the first who proposed an amendment against the Conspiracy Bill. He seemed to have a grudge against the Emperor of the French and his Government.

'Lord Macaulay was an engrossing talker, but

Buckle was far worse. It was difficult for any one at the table to get in a word. He seemed to have read everything and forgot nothing. In one of his volumes he says that Spain and Scotland are the two most priest-ridden countries in Europe. I tried to vindicate my native country, but he was not to be convinced.'

On May 16th, Mr. Black spoke at some length on the Lord Advocate's Annuity Tax Bill, the second reading of which was carried by a decisive majority, the Scottish members being virtually unanimous in its favour.

'At the first reading,' Mr. Black says in his diary, 'as already mentioned, I rather opposed it, but with some hesitation, and after giving it a fair and mature consideration, I sent a letter to my constituents on 21st February, recommending it, as affording a favourable basis for a settlement of the question, and more likely to pass than my own Bill. I thought my views were so reasonable that they would be generally acceptable, but learned with regret that there was a considerable party dissatisfied, and I proposed to the Advocate that we should go down in the Easter Holidays and meet the constituency on the subject. On 13th April we had a meeting with the Magistrates and Town-Council and inhabitants in Queen Street Hall, the Lord Provost (Brown Douglas) in the chair. The Town-Council had come to an agreement to provide £600 a year of stipend

for thirteen ministers, with undoubted security for the payment, and as this was the essence of the Bill, I thought there should be no great difficulty with the details. There was one alteration proposed by them, which I disapproved of. Instead of the assessment being continued at a rate not much under the existing rate for fifteen years, and then terminating, they proposed that it should be at once reduced from 10½d. to 3d. or 4d., and made perpetual; and for the sake of peace I agreed. After a good deal of discussion and wrangling, the proposition of the Town-Council was carried.

'When the Lord Advocate moved the second reading of his Bill, my friend Hadfield moved as an amendment that it should be read a second time that day six months. I spoke at considerable length in favour of the Bill, though I preferred the principles of my own, and in the course of my speech said, upon duly considering the great responsibility that lies upon me as a representative of the City of Edinburgh, I felt that if, on personal considerations, or on account of my own peculiar denominational views, I were to be accessory to frustrating a measure which would have a tendency to alleviate the burdens of my constituents, which would promote peace, and remove a great scandal from religion, I should be pursuing a most unjustifiable course.

'I have the vanity to think that my support tended greatly to smooth the passage of the Bill. Hadfield

withdrew his amendment, and the second reading was carried unanimously. It was read a third time and passed on 12th July, 206 voting for it, and 19 against it. Thirty-four Scotch members were in the majority, and two, the tellers, Mr. Dunlop and Mr. Crum Ewing, in the minority. Shortly after it passed the Lords.'

Another important public measure in which Mr. Black took a part this session was the Government Reform Bill, by which it was proposed to reduce the franchise in burghs to £6. It was brought forward on 16th March by Lord John Russell, and well received by the House, at least by the ministerial side, but obstinately resisted by the Opposition. During several nights the debate dragged its weary length along.

The second reading was taken on April 26, 1860, when Mr. Black took up an independent position in the discussion. He says, 'Spoke first to-night, and got on without much difficulty, and now that the perilous stuff is off my stomach, feel relieved. I fear, however, I have given great offence to friends whose good opinion I should like to retain. I believe, however, what I said was true.'

So did many on the same side of the House, who had not the courage to express their thoughts. One sentence from the speech gives the essence of the objection to the Bill which most weighed with him, and was the expression that gave most offence. 'My chief objection,' he said, 'to the part of the Bill

that provides for the admission of occupants of £6 houses is, that the infusion of such large numbers into the burgh constituencies will dilute and lower the entire constituencies, and give an undue preponderance to one class, and that the least educated.'

'I can see,' he said, 'a principle for Universal Suffrage, but I can see no principle for stopping at £6. The man who pays £5 or £4 will have a good right to say, I am as well entitled to the Franchise as the man who pays 20s. of more rent. Don't imagine that you will stop the agitation; you only give it a shove onwards and downwards, and the downward progress must of necessity be an accelerated one. In twenty years or less you may be obliged to descend to £5 or £4, and in other ten years you will have no standing-ground but on Universal Suffrage. Well, perhaps you think Universal Suffrage the best. If it is, and certainly it has better ground of principle, it would be better to adopt it at once, and thus save all the agitation and fighting that must accompany a downward progress, if downward we must go.'

He said, in writing on this subject to one of his sons:—'I will give up my intention of writing a letter in justification of my speech, waiting for a seasonable opportunity, when I may show that I have always expressed the same sentiments. It ought to be kept in mind that the circumstances were much changed when I spoke to the operatives. We had come down after the discussion on the Derby Bill, when Disraeli said they were willing to reduce the Burgh Franchise to £6. Lord John Russell, on the other side, had said he proposed to reduce it to £6.

The other Liberals wanted £5. All sides of the House were committed to £6 at least. In these circumstances I did not see how one could do otherwise than submit to the decision of the House, but even when I said so, I laid down the very principles that I maintained in my speech, and refused always to pledge myself to anything. Even now I don't see how the House can get over the difficulty. The leaders on both sides, without objection from their followers, have committed us to a Reform, and you cannot keep it dangling before the public as if in mockery. As long as it is unsettled, it will obstruct all business in Parliament, and will be most pernicious to parties and to candidates.

'The Speaker one night beckoned me to speak to him, and complimented me on the speech, saying he had heard it often highly spoken of. If I am abused for it in some quarters, I have, at all events, a few that approve.'

Parliament sat long this session, but the only date on which anything occurred in which Mr. Black took part was 14th August, when Sir John Pakington moved for an increased grant to Ragged and Industrial schools. Mr. Black seconded the motion, and gave some interesting statistics to show how such institutions had diminished crime in Edinburgh. He concluded by saying, 'he thought he had shown that the best policy to diminish criminal expenses was to save classes who were sunk in misery, and on the

verge of crime, and to raise them up to be useful and industrious citizens, and that nothing would have a greater effect in accomplishing this great work than a larger expenditure for the education of these poor perishing children.'

Parliament met again early in February 1861, and Mr. Black was in his place. On 8th March he opposed a Bill introduced by Mr. Sheridan, for the reduction of the Fire Insurance Duty. He thought the tax bad, but necessary. Leave to introduce the Bill was refused.

On 10th April he voted against the reading of Mr. Baines's Borough Franchise Bill. He spoke briefly, amid cries of 'Divide,' and said, 'There might be defects in the present system of representation, but he thought there was no class whose interests were so much attended to in that House as those who lived by manual labour, whom it was the fashion to designate as "the labouring classes," as if they were the only working bees in this great national hive of industry.' He referred to the recent meeting in Edinburgh, where there was much irritation against himself and the Lord Advocate, but not on the question of the Franchise; though he justified his vote against the £6 clause in the last Government Bill. There was little interest, he said, in that question—it was only the support he gave the Annuity Tax Bill that excited their indignation.

On 22d April 1861, he spoke on the Paper Duty,

in reply to an insinuation by Mr. Long, that members on the Liberal side of the house were not sincere in supporting the Bill for its abolition, any more than they were on the subject of Reform. He had never shrunk, he said, from giving his sincere opinion on both subjects; but he thought it a waste of time to go back on what had been said and done five years before. 'Times had changed, and the circumstances under which they acted had changed;—it was of little consequence to him what others had said formerly, and how inconsistently they had acted—the question was, what was the proper thing to do now?'

The 8th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was completed in the Spring of this year, and Mr. Black took the earliest convenient opportunity of celebrating the event by a dinner at Greenwich. It came off on 5th June 1861 in the Trafalgar Hotel. All the principal contributors were invited, besides some of Mr. Black's particular friends in London. There were about fifty present. Among the guests were Sir John Herschel, Robert Chambers, Robert Carruthers, J. R. M'Culloch, Monckton Milnes, Professor Pillans, Professor Masson, Dr. Doran, Dr. Letheby, Dr. Lankester, Messrs. Dasent, R. S. Poole, John Downes, E. S. Dallas, Hepworth Dixon, General Portlock, the Lord Advocate (Moncreiff), Sir W. Dunbar, Sir J. Ogilvie, Messrs. Ellice, Bazley, Caird, Baxter, Lindsay, Buchanan, T. A. Mitchell, W. Miller, T. Longman, Hansard, Vardon, T. Young. There was

some good speaking, but unfortunately no reporter present.

The London correspondent of the *Inverness Courier*, this time, no doubt, the able editor (Carruthers), thus describes the gathering :—

'Tom Moore has a playful satire on the booksellers of his day—the fathers of the Row—whom he represents as holding a joyous feast over the mangled remains of authors, and drinking wine out of poets' skulls ! We had this vision reversed on Wednesday last on the banks of the Thames, where a gay troop of authors might be seen eating whitebait and drinking champagne and claret supplied in profusion by their publishers. The morning papers will have told you of the banquet given in the Trafalgar at Greenwich, by the Messrs. Black of Edinburgh, on the occasion of the completion of their *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Death had removed the greatest of the literary contributors—Macaulay—but the highest representative of science, Sir John Herschel, was present, and it was deeply interesting to look on his venerable white head, and hear the tremulous but silvery tones of his voice as he descanted on the beneficent and blessed progress of science and literature. Another contributor, Mr. Monckton Milnes, spoke admirably, and excited some laughter by saying that, as so many Scotchmen were present, the toast of the evening should have been given by Mr. Buckle, the historian of civilisation ! The long-tried integrity and independent public character of Adam Black were cordially acknowledged—Mr. J. R. M'Culloch, the political economist, threw in some racy Scotch sentences—the Lord Advocate also spoke briefly ; but there was no formal speechifying and no reporters—circumstances which certainly did not detract from the pleasure of the meeting. Lord Brougham's absence was a matter of general regret—his physician has prohibited

all *symposia*, literary or political—and also the absence of three M.P. contributors—Stirling, Cave, and Ricardo. As mingling a little business with pleasure, Mr. Black told us what sums he had expended on the seventh and eighth editions of his *Encyclopædia*—altogether a total of £184,425 : 11 : 4—a prodigious sum to spend on two editions of one work—to say nothing of the final glory and the crowning banquet at the Trafalgar! How different this state of things between authors and publishers from the old Grub Street days satirised by Swift and Pope, or from the later but scarcely less miserable period of Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith!'

[From Mr. Black's Diary.]

Saturday, 22d June.—Like John Gilpin, on pleasure bent, with wife and son to Epsom went, but not a race day—only to see the place and the race-course. Not much enamoured of the village, and found no nice shady grove where we might recline. . . . When we arrived at the London Bridge station, found the neighbourhood in flames, the wharves on the river side one mass of fire, and spreading. Got a cab. Frank and I mounted on the top; went very slowly along the bridge, which was blocked up with human beings and vehicles. We had a full and leisurely view of the terrific conflagration, some time between nine and ten. About eleven the reflection of the flames in the sky being visible at our lodgings, and seemingly increasing, drove to Southwark Bridge, and saw the conflagration at its height, the houses for a long way down the river in flames, and some of the ships which could not get away, it being low water, burn-

ing with a pure white flame; the Thames itself seemingly on fire, the burning oil floating like stars on the surface. What was most melancholy, heard that Mr. Braidwood and eight of his men had perished.'

On 28th June 1861 the conduct of public business in the House having been brought under discussion by Lord Palmerston, Mr. Black made some brief but pertinent remarks on the subject. In supporting the motion, he said, 'This very evening fifteen motions stood in the way of the House, while, on the last occasion when Supply stood first, one motion, the discussion of which occupied five mortal hours, but ended like a flash in the pan, intervened to the detriment of public business. On the 21st inst. there were twenty-nine motions, of which eleven were in the names of Irish members, a fact which showed how zealous they were in the discharge of their Parliamentary duties.'

'Obstruction' at this time had not yet become a recognised form of Parliamentary tactics. Other twenty years passed on before what had for a long time been felt to be an intolerable waste of public time was seriously and definitely dealt with by the House of Commons, chiefly in consequence of the extraordinary zeal displayed by the Irish members in the discharge of what they considered to be their Parliamentary duties.

'The Committee of the House on Ragged Schools was nominated on 6th June 1861. Sir Stafford

Northcote, chairman. After many meetings, and examining witnesses at great length, we had a report by the chairman, and another by Sir James Graham, and to my great regret the Committee decided by eight to four in favour of Sir James's, recommending that no aid should be given to Ragged Schools. This resulted mainly from the evidence of the teachers of the London Ragged Schools, whom I thought more pious than wise, evidently Dissenters and Voluntaries. From their evidence I should consider their schools undisciplined mobs, exclusively plied with good evangelical doctrine by very religious men, who thought their great duty was to feed the children with the bread of Heaven. When asked if they did not think these schools should share in the Government aid provided for education, they said, "No; and that even if offered they would refuse it; they would not mix poison with their children's bread." This was Voluntaryism run mad. Lord Shaftesbury sent us a letter recommending the London schools and teachers. I got up from Edinburgh Mr. Ferguson, teacher of the United Industrial School, who astonished the Committee by informing them that he had no difficulty in teaching Roman Catholic and Protestant children in the same school.'

The great International Exhibition of 1862 was opened on 1st May, and Mr. Black was appointed chairman of class 8, section D, Printing, etc. He says, 'I was unfortunately very ill at the time with

rheumatism, and was hardly able for the labour of going from place to place to examine the specimens. I had two excellent fellow-jurors, however, who did most of the work — Mr. Spottiswoode and Mr. Clowes, printers; and although I had the honour of signing the report as chairman, it was drawn up by Spottiswoode.'

This attack of rheumatism continuing, Mr. Black, at the Whitsuntide holidays, was induced to visit Buxton for the sake of the baths, and at the close of the session repaired to Wiesbaden with the same object. Referring to the gaming-tables which were then established there, he says, 'The Kursaal itself may be called the Gambling Palace, with its large ballroom, its reading-rooms, with all the French, German, and English newspapers and periodicals, and rooms for roulette tables birring all day and every day, Sunday and Saturday, heaps of gold and silver changing hands every minute, but of course the larger proportion swept into the pockets of the bank. There is a kind of fascination in standing among the onlookers and seeing the freaks of fortune and the countenances of the gamblers. I felt disposed to risk a sovereign or a crown, but thought the thing was essentially wrong, and ought not to be touched.'[1]

After an absence of a month, Mr. Black returned

[1] He adds, 'I was once going to Frankfort, and seated myself in an empty carriage. Shortly after a rather pretty French lady came

to Edinburgh on 13th October, considerably the better of his journey. The only public appearance he made during the winter was at a meeting held on 13th November in the Music Hall, in aid of the sufferers in Lancashire from the effects of the American War, at which he was one of the principal speakers.

Parliament met again on 5th February 1863, and he went up to London on the 23d, in answer to a peremptory whip. A party division was expected on a motion by Sir John Hay for quickening the promotion of naval officers, but there was no vote, the question being remitted to a committee.

On the 7th of March the Prince of Wales and his bride made their memorable entrance into London.

in and took the opposite seat. She made some observation which led to a conversation, in which she was very communicative. She told me she was a widow, and had a *chateau* in France, and after talking for some time she took out a pretty thick octavo volume, and began to read pages of figures. I thought she was studying mathematics or logarithms, and asked her to let me see it. When I looked at the title-page I saw it was something about tric-trac, and asked her the meaning of it. She said it was instructions for the gaming-table. I asked if she was in the habit of attending the gaming-table. She said she was. "You must lose a great deal of money, then," I said. "No," she replied; "I gain." "How much in the week?" "About fifteen Napoleons." "Is it through the instructions of this book?" "Yes." I saw a good many of the lines ticked off with a pencil. I asked if these marked the games she had played, and she said they did. She put some questions to me, and I suspect would have liked to have had an opportunity of pigeoning me, but the canny Scot was too cautious for her, and she parted from me at the station with "*Au revoir.*"'

'What a spectacle,' Mr. Black says, 'has there been in London to-day! Such, I believe, was never seen anywhere before. The millions of London and the surrounding country turned out to welcome the bride of the Prince of Wales. The procession of carriages, the magnates with which they were filled, were nothing compared to the welcome of the whole nation to a young Princess, from the confidence they have in her virtues, and the prospect of making the residence of her husband a happy home. I saw her passing not far from Temple Bar, where the crowd was tremendous, and she looked as if rather alarmed.'

During the course of this session Mr. Black moved on its third reading the rejection of the Prison Ministers' Bill, which was opposed by the Nonconformists and three-fourths of the Scottish members. The Government, however, succeeded in obtaining a majority.

'We should,' he said, 'remember that a jail is not a church nor a school, and that the prisoners cannot be treated as free men. Civil and religious liberty are glorious words, but you cannot have civil and religious liberty in a jail where criminals are kept under restraint and coercion, locked up that they may not commit depredations upon others. That is the primary purpose of a prison. Doubtless it is our duty, as far as we can, to endeavour to promote their amendment, though I fear that for one that is reformed ten are deteriorated by the contamination of a jail. When these awful portals are once crossed, the opportunity for amendment is all but gone. The time for improvement is when the in-

cipient criminal is young, and before he has come in contact with a jail. When wandering homeless and destitute about our streets, picking up a precarious subsistence, trembling on the very verge of the jail, this of all the classes in the country most urgently demands the care of the State ; but while you are lavishing thousands on those who do not need your aid, and tens of thousands on those who are too hardened to benefit by it, you most preposterously deny all aid to this most necessitous and most dangerous class. In order to superintend the morals and religion of the prison, it is necessary that a competent officer should be appointed, and it is only reasonable that that officer or chaplain should be selected from the religious denomination of the majority of the place where the prison is situated—in England, from the Episcopalians ; in Scotland, from the Presbyterians ; and in Ireland, from the Roman Catholics, allowing ministers and benevolent persons, with the sanction and under the regulations of the Board, to visit the prisoners. I am not afraid of proselytism. I should be glad if the priests would convert all the Protestant blackguards into good Catholics. We have heard loud lamentations over the Roman Catholic prisoners on account of their being left without the consolations of religion in England and Scotland, but they are in the same case as the Presbyterian prisoners in England and the Episcopalian prisoners in Scotland. I cannot think so ill of any of these denominations as that, knowing that some of their co-religionists are confined in prison, none among them will be found to visit them unless they are paid for their trouble, and that they will all neglect the lesson that is taught in these words, " I was in prison, and ye visited me."'

On this occasion he expressed indignation at the dictatorial manner in which the Protestant Alliance tried to influence members to support his amendment, an interference that did, he said, 'more

damage to Protestantism and evangelical religion than all the priests at Maynooth put together.' The questions of closing public-houses in England, and of allowing Volunteer corps to be embodied in Ireland, which also came up for discussion, were both in his eyes matters to be ruled greatly by the wishes of the respective countries. Along with his parliamentary work at this time, Mr. Black did a good deal of social duty among his numerous parliamentary and literary friends. When the guest of Professor Owen at Sheen, he heard two anecdotes which he made a note of.

'The professor told us he had been asked from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Cornwall Lewis, whether there was anything peculiar in the habits of the goose, which occasioned the tradition that Rome was saved by its cackling, and raising the alarm on the approach of the enemy. He returned for answer that he had a pond and geese before his door, and had watched their habits. At night they took up the most favourable positions; and if any danger seemed to approach, the old gander gave the alarm, and they all immediately plunged into the water. If at any time he happened to come home very late, or rather early, the geese gave the alarm before he came near the house, and always before the dog.

'Another anecdote he gave us. Some time ago when a dock was being excavated near Newcastle they came upon an ancient forest. The trees were petrified on the outside, with hard black wood within; but the most remarkable part of the discovery was that one of the trees was cut in the trunk, and evidently cut by an instrument, and by the hand of man, which the engineer said must have been done many thousands

of years before the creation of man in Paradise. Owen was sent for, and was much puzzled by it. They went down into the mud, examining all about. He was told that chips had been found too. This he could not credit, for if there had been chips at an early age the sea must have washed them away. This only excited his suspicion, but the engineer insisted that this was a proof of the population of the world long before the time of Adam. On the third day some one spoke of a navvy called Darby Joe, who had been working in that quarter for a railway. Darby was asked if he knew anything about the cutting on that trunk. "Them's ma cuttin'," said he. "And the chips?" "Them's ma cuttin' too." He added that the head of the tree should be there too. Owen offered half-a-crown to the first man who should find it, and it was soon forthcoming.'

Mr. Black had long desired to visit Italy, and took the opportunity this autumn of carrying out his wish. On 1st September he sailed from Leith to Dunkirk, accompanied by his son Charles, and proceeding by Brussels, Luxembourg, and Cologne, passed leisurely through Switzerland, entering Italy by the St. Gothard route. He visited all the principal cities of North Italy, and sailed from Leghorn to Naples. Here he spent some days inspecting the remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and although now in his 80th year, boldly made his way to the summit of Mount Vesuvius. He says:

'The ascent of the cone is something terrible, among loose stones, debris of lava and ashes, lying at an angle of fifty degrees. This has to be done on foot, and with the assistance of three of the mountaineers I boldly, or rather foolishly,

made the attempt. I got up about half way, when I became perfectly exhausted, and felt as if I were going to faint. I had hardly had any breakfast, and before commencing the ascent partook of some villanous wine, blasphemously called *Lagrima Christi*. As I lay among the stones, with a keen cold wind blowing over me, M. de Launay threw his cloak over me. I felt really ill, but was determined to get to the top, and rather than return decided on being carried up the rest of the way.. By the help of our stout but greedy guides I accomplished it, and was carried up like an Indian Rajah.'

From Naples he proceeded to Rome, the main object of his visit, arriving there on 10th October. He visited all the great sights of the city with unwearied assiduity, and enjoyed them with the zest of youth. His account of his presentation to the Pope (Pius IX.) is particularly interesting.

'Were at the Palace in good time, accompanied by Madame de Launay,[1] and had time to make observations. Many brought articles for the Pope to bless. Madame de Launay had various strings of beads. The ceiling of the anteroom where we waited was gorgeously painted, but the floor was dirty brick, such as no workman with us would have tolerated. It soiled the ladies' dresses. The chamberlain called us in, group by group, into the audience room. We were last, and I observed through the half-open door the party that preceded us go down on their knees as soon as they entered, then rising and advancing, bowing low as they went, then down on their knees before his Holiness, receiving his blessing on themselves and the things they carried with them.

[1] Wife of M. de Launay, in the Italian diplomatic service, who was of the greatest assistance to Mr. Black in Italy. M. de Launay came afterwards to great distinction as the Italian ambassador at Berlin in 1866.

They then kissed his hand, bowed with their face to the ground, and kissed his toe. When I saw all this, I was horrified at the prospect of being expected either to humble ourselves so, or be guilty of great rudeness. I resolved if this was insisted on to turn on my heel and be off, and I went up to Mr. Talbot and said, "I hope the Pope doesn't expect Protestants to kneel to him?" He said, "That is as you please," and I at once followed in. The Pope was sitting in an arm-chair, dressed in white, with red slippers, and sat all the while that the faithful were worshipping him. When we entered, bowing most respectfully, he rose up like a gentleman, as he obviously is, came forward a little to receive us, and asked a few commonplace questions. He spoke in French, though he understands English quite well. He asked if we were all Scotch. Madame de Launay said she was Swiss and a Catholic. I said we three were Scotch. He then came forward to me and said, "I understand you are a Member of Parliament." I said I had that honour, on which he asked if I was a member of the Parliament of Scotland or the Parliament of England? Proud to be able to correct an infallible man, I told him that, since the union of England and Scotland, there was but one Parliament for the United Kingdom, of which I was a member. He then asked Madame de Launay some questions, when she went through all the manœuvres of a good Catholic.

'I was very well pleased with his Holiness, and believe if he had been born a Scotch laird he would have made a very good landlord, or if his lot had fallen among the ministers of the Church of Scotland, he would have been a respectable *Moderate*.'

From Rome Mr. Black turned his face homewards, visiting on the way Civita Vecchia, Genoa, Geneva, Dijon, and Paris, arriving at Edinburgh on 2d November, 'in good health, thanks to a kind Providence.'

The diary kept by him is very minute in its descriptions of the places visited, and shows his usual shrewdness of observation and historical knowledge. Unlike most English travellers, he devoted the Sundays most sedulously to attending the different Protestant chapels to be found on the route, with apparently more satisfaction than is usually experienced.

CHAPTER VII.

1863-1874.

FROM the beginning of November 1863 to the resumption of his parliamentary duties in February 1864, Mr. Black was in Edinburgh, with the exception of a night in Glasgow, where he assisted at a social meeting of the Glasgow Congregational Union on 17th December, and delivered an excellent speech, full of good sense, of the spirit of toleration, of liberty, and of true Christianity. Speaking of various denominations, Principal Caird had said, 'Whether I travel by the highway of Episcopacy, or by the footpath of Presbyterianism, or by the open common of Independency, if I reach the presence chamber of my Redeemer it will give me little concern;' to which Dr. Begg had taken special objection as a reflection on the authority of Presbyterianism.

'To me,' said Mr. Black, 'there seems considerable aptness in the parable. In comparing Episcopacy to a highway, he may have alluded to its being the road travelled by the higher classes, but I rather think he must have referred to

the wideness of the road as compared with the narrow footpath of Presbyterianism. In the Church of England, although the most discordant doctrines may be taught by her bishops and doctors, yet the highway is sufficiently broad to admit of their all travelling on it without jostling one another. Whether they be High Church, or Low Church, or Broad Church—whether Evangelical, Puseyite, or Rationalistic—there is room and verge enough for them all in the Church of England highway, without any ecclesiastical police being empowered to make them move on in the appointed track, or run the risk of losing their status and stipends. I suspect, however, that it is not so much to the comparison of Episcopacy to a highway as to the comparison of Presbyterianism to a footpath that the rev. doctor objects, as if it implied contractedness and illiberality when contrasted with the others. But in the very speech which contains his animadversions he gives a strong proof of the propriety of the comparison, for he affirms that Dr. Caird and all Presbyterian ministers, instead of publishing such lax or liberal sentiments, are bound by their ordination engagements to the conviction that the Presbyterian Church government and discipline are founded upon the Word of God, and that they are under the strongest obligations to maintain and defend them—plainly implying that if a Presbyterian minister should examine the Scriptures for himself to ascertain their teaching on this subject, he is bound to have no conviction contrary to the profession he made at his ordination engagements, and to take care that he does not wander beyond the limits of the footpath, lest he gets rubbed against the wall or torn by the hedges. When Dr. Caird compares the church polity of the Independents to an open common, he appears to me to adopt a happy simile. In travelling over this common, where there is neither highway nor footpath, there is no doubt that some of the pilgrims may take a roundabout way to their Father's

house. Nay, some may display rather unseemly gambols in the exercise of their freedom. These will generally be the younger and more exuberant spirits, but age and experience will generally correct this tendency without much harm being done. The great body, however, will travel on in the enjoyment of the free air of heaven—the fragrant turf under their feet—in the untrammelled exercise of their faculties; and, guided by the only unerring chart, they will reach the haven of rest not the less surely that they have not trusted to two guides—the one fallible and the other infallible—that they have not permitted the human standard to override the Divine. Objectors naturally enough say, according to the Independent system, we can never hope to see removed that which has so long been a scandal and a reproach to Protestants—the great diversity of opinions and denominations among them; and that which has been the object and desire and prayer to so many pious men must thus remain unaccomplished—the union of all the flock of Christ in one fold.'

Parliament met on 4th February 1864, and Mr. Black went up on the 9th. At the close of the previous session he had given notice of his intention to bring in a Bill for the consolidation of the Copyright Acts. The Government having announced that they did not intend to bring in such a Bill, Mr. Black proceeded to prepare one, which he found very laborious —'a much tougher job than I expected,' and which ultimately had to be withdrawn.

This, though not an important session, was a busy one with him, and he spoke several times. On 18th February he seconded Mr. Buchanan's motion for the rejection of the Caledonian, Scottish Central, and

Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Companies' Amalgamation Bill, which was withdrawn. On 6th April he introduced his Copyright Bill. On 27th April he moved the rejection of Sir John Hay's Bank Notes (Scotland) Bill, in which Mr. Dalglish seconded him. The Bill was withdrawn. It provided that 'It shall be lawful for any company carrying on banking business to make an addition to their own bank notes in Scotland.' He also seconded Sir Wm. Heathcote's Bill for removing the disabilities from the Scottish Episcopal clergy. Among the other notable discussions of the session may be mentioned that on the German-Danish War, the Oxford Tests Bill, and Mr. Bass's Street Music Bill—the last exciting more interest at the time than some more important measures. Garibaldi paid his memorable visit to London this spring, and elicited the greatest amount of enthusiasm. Mr. Black tells how at Mrs. Gladstone's 'At Home' the hero sat between the hostess and Lady Palmerston 'patiently enduring the heat, and the staring, and lionising, evidently feeling it a terrible infliction,' adding that 'he walked a little lame.'

'During this session,' he says, 'I was often detained in the House till the small hours in the morning, but at whatever hour I moved off, I left Palmerston sitting on the front ministerial bench, stooping down with his hat over his face, watching the debate. He was often thought to be sleeping,

but sleeping or not, when he rose to reply, he showed that he had marked the whole progress of the debate, and often, in the gray morning, he walked to his house in Piccadilly. When he went to bed I know not, but next morning, by breakfast time, he must have been ready to receive despatches, consult with the whips and secretaries and others, meet with deputations, make arrangements for future procedure, study his speeches—if he ever did study them—then down again to the House by four or five o'clock till midnight or morning again. He and I were born in the same year. When once I mentioned this to him, adding that I had the advantage in being two or three months older, he remarked he did not see any advantage in that.'

On 4th October 1864 Mr. Black lost his brother-in-law William Tait, who died in his house in Walker Street, Edinburgh, after a comparatively short illness.

'He had been,' he says, 'a steady friend of mine through life, and in our house he was always as a member of the family. When I first knew him he was a regular Tory, and I endeavoured to indoctrinate him into the faith of Whiggery, but ultimately found him too apt a scholar, as he soon shot beyond me into the extremes of Democracy, and in the Magazine which he established he advocated opinions to which I could not subscribe. Nevertheless, although we differed in our

political opinions, that never caused any interruption in our friendship.'

Priorbank, Mr. Tait's residence at Melrose, was now the property for life of Mr. and Mrs. Black. The house and grounds are contiguous to the old abbey,—the orchard, in fact, having been planted by the monks,—and gave ample scope to Mr. Black's love of improvement. The situation of the house is a most desirable one, and one in which Mr. Black took great delight, particularly as it was not very far distant from the village of Newstead and Drygrange farm, where he had spent many happy days in boyhood. The following session of Parliament, however, soon withdrew him from this pleasant retreat, and as it was his last, it may best be described by quotations from his diary :—

'Left Edinburgh for London on 15th February, to attend last session of my parliamentary life. I did not expect or intend to continue my public labours so long. This was my tenth year of service, and I was now eighty-one years of age.'

'The session was not so interesting as the previous one. Parliament had lasted six years, and, as a matter of course, members were more taken up with the approaching election.'

'*Thursday, 23d March.*—This night the great debate on the defences of Canada. The Ministry proposed to vote £50,000 for fortifying Quebec, the Canadians to fortify Montreal, with the prospect of more to be

voted in future years. I agreed with those who thought there was no likelihood of Canada being attacked; that our raising fortifications and sending soldiers would only be a provocation to the Americans; and that any soldiers we could send, or fortifications we could raise, would not be a sufficient defence against the force at their disposal; therefore voted with the minority of 40 against the Ministry, who, however, were supported by 275.

'Same night Hadfield's Oaths Bill carried by 130 to 56. Kept very late. Two o'clock striking as I came up the Birdcage Walk.

'*Friday, 24th March.*—An unseemly scene in the House. On second reading of an Irish Bill, which, after it had been carried, was found not to be printed, Hennessey insisted that the Clerk should read it, although impossible. The Speaker bothered.

'*Tuesday, 25th April.*—Business very dull in the House. Seeing it was about to rise, left at 7. Went to the Alhambra, Leicester Square. Audience almost all men, most with moustaches, large rings, and gold chains, Jewish and dark complexions, as becomes the denizens of Leicester Square. Left early.'[1]

Soon after this Mr. Black took an active part in opposing the Burgh Franchise Bill of Mr. Baines,

[1] Mr. Black was not the only Edinburgh man at the Alhambra that evening, and two younger citizens, sitting in another part of the house, were not a little amused and pleased to see their venerable member coming in, and evidently enjoying the fun as much as anybody. There are probably few men of his position who would

and laid himself open, without any reserve, to the charge of preferring to row in the same boat with Tories, than with Radicals who were, in his opinion, going forward too fast, and endangering the balance of power in the representative machinery of the British Constitution. He accordingly appeared in the novel position of seconding Lord Elcho in opposition to Mr. Baines's Bill. But he was not the only or most important Whig who supported the amendment. The most powerful speech in support of it was delivered by Mr. Lowe.

'*Wednesday, 3d May.*—Elcho moved the previous question, to Baines's and Bazley's motion in support of Bill, in a clever effective speech, which I seconded in a very imperfect way. Leatham replied in a radical speech, and twitted me with making speeches in favour of Lord John Russell's Bill. He was answered by Lowe, in one of the most masterly speeches I ever heard. Then the Lord Advocate (Moncreiff) and Osborne rose together. The Speaker called the Lord Advocate, who stood for some minutes in the midst of a storm of calls for Osborne. The Lord Advocate sat down and Osborne rose, but his speech, which was in favour of the motion, was neither so slashing nor so effective as usual. Gregory moved

not have been afraid to be seen in such a place, still fewer men of his years who would take any pleasure in such an entertainment. It was characteristic of the man, of his vigorous health of body and mind, his freedom from timid or hypocritical respect for Mrs. Grundy.

the adjournment of the debate, and after a tumultuous discussion the House adjourned.

'Buxton and Sir George Grey refused on the part of the Government to indicate their future policy on Reform, further than that they were favourable to it, and would vote for Baines's motion, though they did not approve of it altogether. Horsman followed in a very clever speech, and Dizzy wound up the debate. On a division there were 214 in favour of the motion, and 288 for the amendment—majority 74. Scotch members for the motion, 26; against, 18.'

Mr. Black's conduct on this occasion naturally subjected him to very adverse criticism on the part of the Advanced Liberals of Edinburgh, and contributed materially to his defeat at the next election.

'*Wednesday, 24th May.*—Left London for Melrose at 10 A.M. Remained at Priorbank till Monday 5th June. Very much perplexed about retiring from Parliament at the approaching election, or leaving it to the Committee to decide. Had a meeting on 5th June with conveners and canvassers, who were decided that I ought to stand again, and along with the Lord Advocate. Advertised that we would meet the electors in the Music Hall on Wednesday, 7th June.'

'This meeting being advertised, our opponents were not idle. Every means was used to prevent our being heard. Placards were posted through the streets, urging the working men to be early at the meeting, and crowd the hall. The Lord Provost (Lawson)

was in the chair, but could hardly get a hearing. When the Lord Advocate and I appeared, we were received with yells and tumult, joined in by men apparently respectable, and it was said that even clergymen were not ashamed to help in the disturbance. I tried to be heard, and stretched my voice to the utmost, but in vain, and had to speak just to the reporters. By the time the Lord Advocate got up to speak the audience had expended much of their fury, and he, though amidst tumult and interruption, was better listened to.'

Some of the reporters on this occasion, finding it impossible to take down two consecutive sentences of Mr. Black's speech, made their way to the platform, and took up their seats at the speaker's right hand. The proceedings at this meeting were correctly described in the *Scotsman* as, 'on the whole, of the most disgraceful and extraordinary character ever witnessed at a public meeting in Edinburgh.' A motion in favour of Mr. Black and the Lord Advocate was put and carried, notwithstanding, at the close of the meeting, without any counter motion.

The session was now drawing to a close, and Mr. Black returned to his duties in Parliament on 13th June.

'*Friday, 16th June.*—Voted for the ballot with considerable doubts. Motion lost by 118 to 74.

'Asked by Bright how I was getting on in Edinburgh, and if I was to get all the Tories. Said I hoped so.

'*Sunday, 18th June.*—At Martin's,[1] possibly for the last time. I shall ever remember the faithful and affectionate discourses of that heavenly-minded man, who must have been a centre of incalculable good in the sphere where he is placed.

'Reading *Butler's Analogy* in the evening.

'*Friday, 23d June* 1865.—Sat as a member in the House of Commons for the last time, after having served as a representative for Edinburgh for nearly ten years. Although I cannot boast of any great deed accomplished, my conscience bears me witness that I served my constituents and my country faithfully, and to the best of my ability, without fear or favour. When I first entered Parliament I was seventy-two years of age, and it was predicted that if I attended the late sittings the first session would kill me. Yet by the good providence of God I retired, after ten years' constant attendance, in as good health as when I first entered; and although I lived very temperately, frequently shared in the hospitality of members of the House and others with whom it was an honour and a pleasure to associate. These parties were a very agreeable relaxation from public business, and had a tendency to keep me active. I lived on friendly terms with a large number of members on the Liberal side of the House, and even with some on the opposite side, and I am happy to think that in

[1] Mr. Black was a regular worshipper at the late Mr. Martin's (Congregational) chapel, Westminster.

no instance had I any unpleasant difference with any one.

'In 1864 I had been appointed one of the Commissioners to inquire into the state of education in Scotland. Our first meeting was on the 14th November 1864, and we had numerous meetings during the next two years, and examined a great number of witnesses. It appeared to me that it was the general desire that we should have a National instead of a Denominational and Sectarian system of Education, but the recommendations of the Commission appeared to me a lame and unsatisfactory conclusion.

'The Bill founded on the Report of the Commission was justly thrown out by the Lords. From the first a feeble and decrepit bantling, it died in their hands, after all the nursing and dandling it got.

'Had the Lord Advocate taken more decided ground, and acted upon his own views, a better Bill might have been carried, or if it had been lost, it would have fallen more gloriously. But he was too desirous to carry a Bill, and had to modify to please one and another, especially the leaders in Church and State. In the Commission we had four Peers, three Lords of Session, two Sheriffs, one Procurator of the Church of Scotland, and no decided school reformers.'

Referring to the election of 1865, when he failed to secure re-election, Mr. Black goes on to say—

'At the meeting which the Lord Advocate and I had with the operatives in Brighton Street Church in 1859, I made an unfortunate slip in my speech. I had given my views on the reform of Parliament, and in noticing the variety of plans proposed by others, such as the reducing of the Franchise to a £6, £5, £4 rental, or to Universal Suffrage, without meaning that I approved of any of them, and without any consideration but that of choosing among the variety of schemes, I said I would recommend the £6 Franchise, although I did not say I would support any such measure, as I had always refused to give any pledge. Indeed it was such a merely cursory observation, that I thought no more of it till it was brought forward by my opponents in 1865 as proof that I had violated a pledge, and a great handle was made of it. This, and my support of the Lord Advocate's Annuity Tax Bill, the old spectre of Maynooth, and the clamour against my age, were the stock charges against me.

'All this, however, would not have availed if the adversary had not had the advantage of a preliminary canvass. While we were in London attending to our public duties, an active canvass had been going on, especially in the more obscure districts, where the number of voters had been greatly increased. I was placed at another disadvantage. I had no opportunity of defending myself against the unscrupulous misrepresentations made against me. In the Music

Hall I was prevented from being heard by the riot and noise. Then Mr. M'Laren had a great meeting in Brighton Street Church, where his Anti-Annuity Tax admirers eagerly listened to his charges against us; while afterwards an opportunity of meeting in the same church, though promised to the Lord Advocate and me, and agreed to by the managers, was afterwards withdrawn, and their doors shut against us. In short, I had no opportunity of vindicating myself from the unjust aspersions which were freely and widely scattered. But I will say no more on this subject.'

The contest was carried on with intense bitterness for several weeks, and terminated on the 13th of July 1865. The candidates were, on the one hand, Mr. Black and the Lord Advocate (Moncreiff), on the other Mr. Duncan M'Laren and Mr. John Miller, C.E. At the close of the poll they stood as follows:—

M'Laren	4354
Moncreiff	4148
Black	3797
Miller	3723

Of Mr. Black's position the *Scotsman* said truly, 'He has ended his public life as he began it, fighting for freedom, reason, and justice, and courageously speaking the words of truth and soberness against the falsehood of extremes. Whoever shall write our annals true, will, if he hesitate to display the circum-

stances which closed the career of our best citizen of his own generation, hesitate in tenderness not to the man, but to the City.'

The *Daily News* said: 'We cannot exult over the defeat of such a man as Adam Black; his high character, his long association with the Liberal cause, and his constancy to its fortunes when it cost something to be a Liberal, peremptorily forbid the indulgence of such a feeling. But we may express a calm satisfaction in the fact that he is replaced in the representation of Edinburgh by one whose Liberalism is a thing not of memory but of action.'

Mr. Black's political life was now closed, and he was not sorry for it. So far as he was personally concerned it was a relief to him; and neither by speech nor by letter did he ever indicate the slightest disappointment, or cherish any grudge in connection with it. His nature was too healthy and magnanimous for any such weakness. Very seldom are vigorous men, who have been mixed up in municipal or national politics, so perfectly free as he was from vindictiveness. He could not only forgive—as a Christian is bound to do—but he could also forget, as Christians, unfortunately, cannot always do.

He had never taken special delight in political or other conflicts, but had been drawn into them, and pushed into positions of prominence which he would

have preferred to avoid, but had too high a sense of public duty and too little fear of unpopularity to shirk. There can be no doubt that it was his chief delight to work away quietly at the North Bridge or in Drummond Place, especially on the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and that the pleasures of his own family circle, in town or country, were more to him than all the stirring or pompous excitements of public meetings and entertainments. As he had done when he retired from the Town-Council, he now went back to his own desk and books, and resumed the even tenor of his home life as if nothing had happened. Even in his parliamentary career, the dignity and *eclât* of which he frankly enjoyed, it was very manifest that the occasional company of his wife and children, and the trips which they took together, were more prized by him than all the glories of the House of Commons. His first thought was to do his duty, and when that was done for the day, he was open, at an age when most men are fit only for repose, to enter heartily into any rational amusement. He was ready even to undertake the most fatiguing journeys into foreign countries, for the sake of new information and new sensations. Accordingly, he started in March 1866 on a visit to Spain in company with his son Charles, who, from his long residence in Chili, was a master of the Spanish language. They started on 17th March, and were back in Edinburgh on 13th May, after a run through France, and a more leisurely progress through

Spain, from San Sebastian to Gibraltar; where the old man, seeing Africa so near, determined to set his foot on that continent, and crossed over to Tangiers in Morocco. 'In Spain,' says Mr. Black, 'we saw a country blessed with a rich soil and a fine climate, abounding in mineral wealth; but cursed by the ignorance, superstition, and tyranny of man, and showing no sign of reformation. May the unexpected light that has arisen shine brighter and brighter and fill the whole land!'

This visit he made the subject of an interesting lecture, which he delivered to the Philosophical Institution on 17th March 1868.

The autumn holidays were spent at Priorbank, the winter in Edinburgh, with the quiet happiness of the 'nations whose annals are dull.'

In the spring of 1867, being still troubled with rheumatism, his only ailment, Mr. Black paid another visit to Wiesbaden, in company with his son. They had cold and disagreeable weather, but when it permitted, they revisited most of their old haunts. On their return they halted at Frankfort, Homburg, Baden-Baden, Strasbourg, etc., finally resting for some time at Paris, to see the great Exposition there.

One of the few clouds that ever darkened Mr. Black's life settled down this year on his house. His bright and amiable wife had gradually been losing her sight, and in 1867 the right eye was quite blind.

It was operated on by Dr. Walker, the most eminent oculist in Edinburgh, but inflammation supervening, she suffered extreme pain, and was much reduced in health. She regained her strength, but not her sight, and the left eye gradually became obscured like the other. It was operated on by Dr. Bowman of London, but with no satisfactory result, and after 1869 all hope of recovery of sight had passed. The affliction was borne, as a kindly Providence has arranged it should be almost universally, with the most perfect and cheerful resignation.

The family circle was in 1868 broken by the death, in September of that year, of Mr. James Richardson, who was married to Mr. Black's second eldest daughter. He was much lamented by his fellow-citizens, having proved himself a very trustworthy and capable man in the varied public and private duties to which he always devoted himself ungrudgingly.

Mr. Black had for several years been one of the seven Curators, who, under the new Scottish Universities Act, are patrons of the University of Edinburgh, in place of the Town-Council. This is certainly one of the least pleasant or desirable of all public offices, though—in proof of the patriotism of our citizens—no man has yet declined it. It is impossible for any man to exercise this function without giving much dissatisfaction to all the candidates for a Professorship except *one*. The dis-

appointed competitors and their friends will naturally conclude that the men who think proper to prefer A to B, of whose merits they (the competitors and friends) are so perfectly assured, must be very incapable or very little to be trusted. There was more of this feeling in former times, and with more reason, when the selection of the best man to teach Mathematics or Metaphysics was committed to thirty-three persons, the majority of whom knew no more of Mathematics or of Metaphysics than they did of the Eleusinian Mysteries or the Abracadabra. Now that the number of patrons is so select, there is less chance of ignorance and undue influence; but the very smallness of their number makes the vote of each Curator of more consequence, and exposes him to the more severe criticism, if he seem to wise or foolish people to have been unduly influenced by stronger wills or diplomatic considerations.

Mr. Black was not a man likely to be unduly influenced in these matters by anybody; he was as competent to judge of the qualifications of candidates for Professorships as any intelligent well-educated Scotsman could be, nor was it very easy to find in academic circles or elsewhere any will stronger than his own.

Nevertheless, he was, on more than one occasion, obliged to defend himself against the charge that he and the majority of his colleagues had not done their duty, or put in the right man.

The Chair of Moral Philosophy in the University became vacant in 1868 by the death of Professor M'Dougall, who had succeeded Professor Wilson, very unjustly, as some thought, who considered the claims of Professor Ferrier infinitely superior—very deservedly, as others thought, who knew Mr. M'Dougall's great merits.

The number of candidates in 1868 was not numerous, and some of them were men of decided mark and merit. Two in particular came forward at an early stage, both with the highest claims to consideration—Dr. Hutchison Stirling, known in Europe and America as the *par excellence* expounder of Fichte; Professor Flint of St. Andrews, minister of the Established Church, and distinguished Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews. The forces seemed equally divided, when late in the day appeared the Rev. H. Calderwood, minister of a U.P. Church in Glasgow, well known as a distinguished Edinburgh student, and author of an essay on the 'Infinite,' in which he had boldly, but respectfully, controverted and attacked his great and revered master, Sir William Hamilton. Up to this point the election was supposed to lie between Dr. Stirling and Professor Flint, neither of whom, unfortunately, satisfied everybody; the one being most unjustly suspected and dreaded as an apostle of German heresy and Pantheism; the other as unjustly looked on as a representative of Established

Church orthodoxy and exclusiveness. When it came to the vote both were rejected, and Mr. Calderwood was elected by the vote of Mr. Black, to the utter disappointment and indignation of the friends of the other candidates, naturally of the candidates themselves, visibly at least of one of them.

Mr. Black's conduct was severely criticised in the *Scotsman*, more bitterly in the *Courant*, in letters by anonymous, but not therefore contemptible, correspondents. He took the trouble to answer in both papers, and defended himself very well, but these letters seem now not of sufficient interest to be given here.

The election of a Principal of the University in place of Sir David Brewster was a much more trying and agitating question. The contest lay ultimately between Sir James Simpson, the great physician, and Sir Alexander Grant, the able Oxford editor of Aristotle's Ethics, and Director of Education in Bombay for several years. 'My predilections,' says Mr. Black, 'were all in favour of my old and valued friend Professor Simpson, and I had told some of my fellow-curators so; but, to my astonishment, the majority of the Professors, over whom it was proposed to appoint him as president, resisted his appointment. I saw that I must either vote for my friend, and introduce discord and disorder into the University, for the election was understood to depend upon my

vote, or I must vote for the stranger, and disappoint and offend my friend and his adherents. I felt that I had no choice; that it was my duty, as far as possible, to maintain the peace and prosperity of the University. But it was a most painful dilemma.' This was probably the most trying exercise of the kind that Mr. Black ever experienced. But for the determined attitude of the majority of the Professors, he would without any difficulty have voted for the man whom he knew so well; whom he, with good reason, loved and admired, not only as a personal friend, but as one of the bright particular stars that have made the University of Edinburgh glorious, and—still higher claim—earned undying remembrance among the chief benefactors of all mankind.

Mr. Black was engaged this year in another public duty, which he intended to be his last, and which, as before, subjected him to unfriendly, not to say unfounded, censure. He was asked by the Edinburgh Water Company to give evidence as to the agreement made between them and the Town-Council in 1847, when he was Provost, which, he says, 'they were entitled to have, and I was well disposed to give, as the object of the present Council was to repudiate what we had done, and to appoint a Board to manage the supply of water to Edinburgh, by monopolising all the glory and honour, and all the patronage, to the Town-Council, and displacing the neutral members, which the Council of 1847 had agreed to.'

Mr. Black in his evidence did not hesitate to express his opinion as to the danger of mismanagement and jobbery if the whole thing were left in the hands of the Town-Council. This, of course, gave great offence, and in the report of the Council on the subject, Mr. Black was spoken of in terms which moved him to address a very pithy letter to the Lord Provost, William Chambers.

'What I predicted,' says Mr. Black, 'came sooner to pass than I anticipated. Although the new Water Act gave the Town-Council power to introduce into the Trust members from neutral bodies, and the Provost proposed that it should be composed of a certain number of neutral parties, his motion was opposed, and a counter motion was carried against him by the ruling spirits of the Council, who thought it best to act on the old Scotch saying,

'"Our ain fish-guts to our ain sea-maws."'

Though now so old, and in every sense 'Emeritus,' Mr. Black still continued to take a hearty interest in everything of importance affecting the interests of the city of Edinburgh. Two subjects involving those soon after this occupied his attention—(1) the treatment of boys in the Hospitals under the management of the city; and (2) the question of a new site for the Royal Infirmary. A question came before the Merchant Company involving both matters, and Mr. Black made his contribution to the subject.

It had been resolved to build a new Infirmary, and large subscriptions had been received for the purpose. It had been originally intended to rebuild the infirmary on its old site, but it was afterwards suggested that the grounds of Watson's Hospital would be a far better situation. After thorough discussion in every public organ, the new site was generally approved of, and the managers of the infirmary offered £43,000 for Watson's Hospital and grounds. That offer was accepted by the governors of Watson's Hospital; but a motion to disapprove of it was made in the Merchant Company, and lost by only one vote. Another meeting of the Merchant Company was called to decide the question more deliberately. 'I was anxious,' says Mr. Black, 'to give my opinion on the whole case, hoping that it might have some influence on the decision. Another inducement I had to appear was, that I thought it probable this might be the last appearance I should make in public affairs, and as it was in the Merchant Company that I made my first public appearance fifty-two years ago, I chose my seat as near as possible to the spot where I sat that day, when one of the respectable old supporters of the powers that were tapped me on the shoulder and reminded me that I was "ower young to speak."' Mr. Black might now have been considered 'ower auld' to take part in public business by those who judge of the capacity of other men by their own; but his speech showed

no sign of decaying power or fitness to assist his fellow-citizens in matters affecting the whole community. He seconded the motion of the Master of the Company, Mr. Duncan, to approve of the sale of the Hospital and grounds, which was carried by a large majority.

'On the 20th February 1870,' the diary continues, 'I completed the eighty-sixth year of my age, and may now consider my earthly pilgrimage as finished. There may still remain a few days of grace, but I may say my race is run. I have reached the goal which separates the seen from the unseen world.

'If I stood on the mountain-top where Moses stood, although I could not see before me what Moses saw, I can look back and mark all the way by which I have been led, and the goodness and mercy which have followed me.

'I have enjoyed one of the greatest of earthly blessings—health greatly beyond what is usually vouchsafed to the human race. Other temporal blessings I have been favoured with, not only beyond my deserts, but much beyond what I could have ventured to hope for in my most sanguine moods When first left upon my own resources my position was of the humblest. Without any superior wisdom or powers of my own, Providence has raised me to honours which it would have been presumption and folly in me to aspire to, and increased my

store till I may say my cup has been made to run over.

'He has blessed me with an affectionate wife, a help-meet for me, who has been spared to assist and counsel me through my long life, though He has been pleased to visit her with a sad affliction in the deprivation of sight.

'I have also had great cause for gratitude for obedient and well-conducted children, four sons and five daughters, and although we have now been married fifty-three years, they are all spared to us till the present day. . . .

'In looking back upon all the way that I have been led, I can now perceive that many of those events which were very grievous to me turned out to be blessings in disguise, and in many instances where I was not conscious of danger at the time, I can now see I was in extreme peril, and my feet were brought out of the net by a merciful Providence, unperceived by myself. May we not suppose that it will form one of the most delightful occupations of those who reach the realms of bliss, to look back upon all the interpositions of the unseen gracious hand by which they have been led all the way through?

'Although I have enjoyed so much peace and prosperity during my earthly pilgrimage, I cannot look back upon my long life without shame, when I see how much of my precious time I permitted to

run to waste, and how little I have done for Him to whom I am indebted for all the goodness and mercy I have enjoyed. May my children be more diligent and zealous in His service than I have been, and make up for their father's shortcomings and failures, and may we at last meet in the regions of purity and bliss, a family in Heaven!'

At the close of 1870, Mr. Black, then in his 87th year, formally retired from the business of which he had for sixty-three years been the head, and handed it over to his sons James, Francis, and Adam. This, however, made little alteration in the ordinary tenor of his life. He still continued, without much interruption, to walk daily up to the North Bridge, to attend directors' meetings, and engage in public proceedings, to take an interest and assist in all the business, public or private, which had any claim on him. The strong constitution with which he was blessed by nature, and which his cheerful activity and temperate habits so wisely preserved, held on for nearly ninety years without any serious sign of decay. The rheumatic attacks which made it necessary for him to seek a remedy in foreign parts were sometimes severe, but not invincible. They never laid him up in bed.

On 2d April 1872 he wrote in his journal:—'I yesterday followed to the grave the earthly remains of my old friend Claud Muirhead, who died on Thursday the 28th March in his 90th year. And

now, of all the 123 boys who entered the class in the High School opened by Mr. Christison in 1791, I only am left alone. May He who has watched over me and sustained me thus far never leave me nor forsake me, but unworthy though I be, bring me in His own good time to His kingdom and glory.'

Here ends Mr. Black's account of his PILGRIMAGE, to which there is little to add.

On 29th February 1873 he attended a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, and made a short speech in reply to a few words of kindly congratulation from the chairman. He attended another meeting soon after, which he addressed. These exertions, made at the most inclement and trying time of the year, proved too much for him, and he was soon after laid up with a dangerous attack of congestion of the lungs. This, however, with his constitutional vigour, he shook off, and about the end of March was again out of doors, and following his ordinary course. In summer he went down as usual to Priorbank, where, from the time of his brother-in-law, William Tait's death, he had been in the habit of spending several months every year, taking the greatest interest in everything that could be done to promote the amenity of the place and its neighbourhood. This summer he appeared to be in no way weaker

than the year before. One day about the beginning of September he walked from Priorbank to Darnick Hydropathic Establishment and back, a distance of three or four miles. The effort, though made without difficulty, hurt him, and brought on aggravated symptoms of a weakness common to old men, with which he had latterly been troubled. Soon after this he returned to Edinburgh, and for the next four months he was very much confined to the house. During that period he suffered great bodily pain, but his mind continued bright and active, and up to a week before his death he was able to come into the dining-room. For five days only he was wholly confined to bed, but even then he was still cheerful.[1] On the Thursday before his death some psalm tunes were played to him, which gave him great pleasure, and he told his medical attendant, Professor Spence, that he would not exchange his condition for that

[1] The following letter addressed to one of Mr. Black's sons by an old friend (Mr. J. R. Findlay), gives an interesting glimpse of the venerable pair in their latter days :—'Having ascertained from one of your brothers that your father was able to receive a visit, I called at Drummond Place one afternoon, and was most kindly received by him and by your mother, who, though quite blind, was otherwise alert and cheerful. Your father seemed reluctant to move about, apparently from dread of local pain when he rose from his chair ; but otherwise was free from any sign of age or decrepitude, though close on the end of his 90th year. He talked of ordinary matters, and of old friends ; of my grand-uncle Mr. John Ritchie, of Mr. John Ramsay M'Culloch, and others ; but also on graver topics. Your father clearly indicated that he knew his illness to be mortal, and his time brief, looking to the close with philosophic and pious

of the strongest man in Edinburgh. On that day the pain ceased, and the weakness increased, till early on Saturday morning, 24th January 1874, he peacefully passed away. His last words were, 'I feel the tightening of the ropes that draw me up to Heaven.'

His remains were laid in Warriston Cemetery, where a Gothic monument erected by his family marks his grave.

A more imposing and remarkable tribute to his memory was before long offered by a number of his fellow-citizens, of all ranks in society, and of all shades of politics. A public meeting was held in the Council Chambers on 24th November 1874, con-

calmness. He spoke of his unusually great age very gratefully, of having retained strength of mind and body; and looked back with quiet satisfaction to the work he had done. "When I consider," he said, "my position and opportunities, I do not see that I could have done much better"—spoken not boastfully, but firmly and unaffectedly; and the manly candour of the sentiment seemed to me nobly characteristic of Mr. Black. I observed that his long life had been one of usefulness and honour; adding, that if he did look back with some complacency, he had better grounds for so doing than the old nobleman, who, when dying, being asked if he wished to clear his conscience, said:—"No, I have nothing to express regret about, for, thank God, I never denied myself anything." Your father, after a moment's pause, broke into one of his peculiar hearty laughs, asking Mrs. Black if she had heard the story, and repeating it for her benefit. 'What might have become a too sad and trying interview was thus lightened up; and when I rose to leave he thanked me with great cordiality for my visit, and walked to the door of the room with me; only the firm pressure of his hand implying that he knew we were bidding each other a final farewell.'

vened by Lord Provost Falshaw, in compliance with an influential requisition, 'to consider the propriety of inaugurating some memorial to commemorate the long and useful public services of the late Mr. Adam Black.' Among those who took part in the proceedings or were present were, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, M.P., James Cowan, M.P., Principal Sir Alexander Grant, Messrs. Charles and John Cowan, Rev. Dr. Alexander, Rev. Dr. Grant, Rev. Dr. Arnot, Dr. William Smith, Dr. Donaldson of the High School, Messrs. Harrison, Livingston, Archer, Lancaster, J. H. A. Macdonald, Thoms, Colston, etc. A committee was appointed, subscriptions were obtained, and it was ultimately decided that the memorial should take the form of a bronze statue, to be erected in East Princes Street Gardens. The sculptor chosen was Mr. John Hutchison, R.S.A., and on 3d November 1877 the statue was unveiled in the presence of a large number of citizens. It stands between the Scott Monument and the statue of Professor Wilson, a striking and dignified likeness of the man as he stood in his robes of office, erect and resolute, a very embodiment of Horace's

"Justum et tenacem propositi virum."

The erection of this statue was the first example given in Edinburgh of such a tribute to merits of a purely personal and civic kind. Among many monuments which adorn or disfigure that beautiful city, in

memory of worthy or unworthy men, this statue is in that respect unique and valuable. The very place in which it stands, between the monuments of two illustrious representatives of Conservative principles, is suggestive of many thoughts, and of the changes that have come since the day in 1817, when the bold young Dissenting bookseller rose in the Merchants' Hall to move his obnoxious resolutions in favour of Burgh Reform. Among the men who in the centre of Scottish intelligence worked hardest, most unselfishly, most influentially, to bring about the better government and the better times of Queen Victoria's reign, none deserved more enduring remembrance and gratitude than Adam Black.

He was eminently a public-spirited man, and possessed the primary qualities requisite for influencing others and achieving success. With the characteristic national quality of sagacity he was largely gifted. He was a first-rate man of business, methodical, punctual, good at planning, and equally good in attending to the execution of details. Whatever he took in hand he did it thoroughly, and could always be relied on absolutely. His outspoken honesty was all the more influential that it was associated with so much shrewdness. His courage was invincible, and always rose with the occasion. It was of the highest kind—that which is founded on a sense of right. To be unpopular, to be misconstrued,

to be denounced, was to him nothing in comparison with saying and doing what he believed to be the right thing. It might as truly be said of him as of John Knox, that he never feared the face of man. But though thus brave, and for a good part of his life much engaged in conflict, he was naturally very peaceable, and much preferred home quietness and work to public displays and contentions. Even in the midst of the hottest warfare he was good tempered, free from bitterness, and ready to forgive. Unfair or injurious accusations were to him generally a matter of surprise and regret rather than of irritation and reprisal. Without any exaggeration of his merits, he must be allowed to have had in his character some of the chief elements of nobility and greatness which have made Scotland what she is among nations—singleness and definiteness of purpose, combined with unflinching resolution; a severe sense of duty and simplicity of tastes, with great toleration for opinions and tastes differing from his own, resulting in well-balanced fairness of judgment; a deep-seated and abiding regard to the Divine Will, with perfect contempt for priestly conventions, and perfect freedom from the fear of man.

Of such men, devoting themselves sincerely to the public service, any nation may be proud; and Edinburgh, the centre of the Scottish nation, did well to express in an enduring form for future generations

her estimate of the character and services of such a man.

Mr. Black's political opinions for some time, and his ecclesiastial connection for a still longer time, were hindrances rather than helps to his success in life; but his position as a link between the learned and the mercantile castes of Edinburgh, combined with his personal qualities and opinions, marked him out at an early stage as a man destined to occupy an important and peculiar position in the politics and government of Edinburgh. The Whig party, to which he always belonged, had in that city up to about 1820 very few representatives of any marked ability outside the Parliament House. A few distinguished and ever-to-be-remembered lawyers were its life and soul. Among the mercantile community, the party had been up to that time in a decided minority, so far at least as visible exertions were concerned. Of the few who occupied in that class of the citizens of Edinburgh the honourable position of pioneers of reform, Adam Black was from the first the leading spirit. There may have been more fluent speakers and more demonstrative men, but none could be compared to him for persistent energy and *stamina*.

It was the fashion in those days, as it is still, on the part of those arrogating to themselves an exclusive regard for the British Constitution, to call those who sought to amend its imperfections Radicals,

Revolutionists, enemies of Church and State. Adam Black was naturally regarded as a peculiarly pronounced type of persons of that 'pestilent' sort; having the hardihood to believe, and never hesitating to declare, that the existing method of carrying on the affairs of the nation was shamefully defective and unjust, and that the Church upheld by the nation for the promotion of Christianity not only had no exclusive right to that privilege but had proved in fact to be a failure.

His political principles did not change, but he lived long enough to find himself in the rear rather than in the front of the Liberal party, and even to be denounced by its most advanced representatives as little better than a Tory, if not worse. In regard to the Franchise, in particular, he exposed himself to great obloquy by his very decided reluctance to lower the figure to what the majority of the Liberal party considered reasonable. He had never regarded the extension of the privilege of voting for a Member of Parliament as the great cure for national ills. He looked on it as a privilege rather than a right, to be conceded only so far as those hitherto excluded from its enjoyment had proved themselves fit to exercise it with freedom and intelligence. Never was his courageous honesty more exhibited than in the position he assumed in 1859, when he told the working men of Edinburgh to their faces that he had no sympathy with Trades Unions and Strikes, and con-

sidered it dangerous to the State to throw the balance of power too much into the hands of the class they represented. The tendency to flatter the multitude is one of the greatest vices of modern politics. From that vice Mr. Black was notably free. Not even Coriolanus more proudly disdained to win popularity, by the smallest divergence from the path in which he thought it his duty to walk. He was well entitled to say, in addressing his constituents in 1865—

'During a long life I have done and suffered much to promote the rational liberty of the country. I have opposed misrule when many dared not cheep, but who, when the danger was over, became extreme Liberals. As I opposed the threatenings of power, I will not bow at the shrine of popularity.'

To a man by nature a reformer, it is a pleasure to oppose misrule; but for such a man to be out of sympathy with the masses from whom he sprung, and whose good he desires, is very painful. This was, to a considerable degree, the position of Mr. Black in the latter part of his Parliamentary career, and to this, combined with other causes, unpleasant now to dwell on, was due his final defeat in 1865.

On the subject of Education he was far in advance of his own party and political leaders, even to the last. The interest he took in it was not of sudden growth, from political or ecclesiastical motives, as is often seen. He had, while still a young man, de-

voted himself practically to teaching, in the only sphere open to him—the Sunday School; and he had early come to the conclusion, which he consistently maintained and acted on through life, that the so-called 'religious difficulty' did not exist; that it was as much a creation for the ecclesiastical or superstitious mind as any goblin or spectre that ever frightened simple peasant or villager. He believed that a system of National Education, as distinguished from Denominational, was not only the right thing, but was perfectly practicable, if people would only lay aside their ecclesiastical pretensions and prejudices. Chiefly on that ground, he, as a member of the Scottish Education Commission of 1864, differed from the rest of the Commissioners, and appended to their report a note of his own, very plain and practical, which, now looked at in the light of Lord Young's Act of 1872, makes one wonder that Adam Black was the only man of that carefully selected body of wise men who hit the nail on the head, and proposed what has since then become law.

The portrait prefixed to this volume gives a fair idea of what Mr. Black looked like in his eightieth year. He could not be called handsome, but he was distinctly what in Scotland is called a "wiselike" man—of goodly stature and breadth, very firm on his feet, which he set down with emphasis; of good but not regular features, marked by smallpox—a broad

and lofty brow, pleasant blue eyes, firm nose, very firm mouth and jaws; altogether, the form and face of a strong man, physically and mentally, eminently healthy, capable, trustworthy.

In society he was always genial, and took great pleasure in conversation. He was not averse to occasional discussion, and liked a well-conducted argument. To the influence of wit and humour he was very open, and like all men of healthy and broad nature, he thoroughly relished a good joke. His own stock of anecdote was large and varied, and this makes it matter of deep regret that he recorded so very few of them in his *Pilgrimage*. If there had been a painstaking Boswell to perform this duty, this memoir might have been of very great interest in that respect compared with what it really is. Such anecdotes, however, as Mr. Black could tell, related to other people rather than to himself. The little incidents which give the chief charm to biographical narrative seemed to escape his notice, and he seldom could give any circumstantial account of things in which he had taken part.

In daily life, after business hours, he was never idle. His main relaxation was reading, and his favourite week-day reading to the last was Shakespeare, of whom he never tired, and history. His Sunday books were, of course, first the Bible, and next some of the good old Puritan and Covenanting divines. But he was not confined to them: Richard

Baxter was one of his special favourites, so also was the learned and judicious Macknight.

Of Music he had no knowledge, and his taste in that respect appears to have been very little cultivated. It is a curious fact that two of his most distinguished contemporaries, both men of fervid poetic temperament, had the same defect — Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Guthrie.

'The moral tone of the man,' one of his sons says, 'was of the kind that inspires those around him with reverence, and a desire to imitate him. He endeavoured always to avoid every appearance of evil, and was equally anxious to avoid everything partaking of unscrupulousness or mere policy. His charity in judging others was quite remarkable. He had no pleasure in scandal or idle gossip; he put them away from him with a gentle disgust. In regard to the Franchise, in particular, he measured other men in this respect by himself, and by the example of his father before him. Class distinctions were distasteful to him to a degree, and I never knew any one more devoid of snobbery. Many a time I have heard him say that "no working man who desired to have a vote should have any difficulty in advancing himself to the £10 limit, and that the incentive to do so was for the good of the people."'

Mr. Black's piety was of the deep undemonstrative kind. He was not the least given to quoting texts

or using unctuous phrases; but if he had lived in times when such things were done, he would certainly have chosen to be shot or hanged twenty times over rather than say 'Yes' when he meant 'No.' His love of the Bible, which to the last he regarded from the old orthodox point of view as divinely inspired, and free from all error, from Genesis to Revelation, was intense. He read it daily, morning and evening, with a never-cloying zest. Baxter, and Doddridge, and Howe, were duly read and revered, but Moses and Isaiah and Paul were for him above them as high as the heavens are above the earth.

Church attendance, as the extracts from his diary show, was an integral part of his life. Nothing short of illness ever prevented him from being found in his place on Sunday. As already mentioned, he was one of the pioneers of Sunday school instruction, and all through life he took a deep interest in such work, and in missionary effort.

At home he was very strict in religious observances. Family worship was conducted by himself every evening. On Sunday, the day of rest and gladness, it was perhaps a little longer than usual, lasting about an hour each time. After an extempore prayer, one or two chapters were read, on which all the members of the household were catechised; psalms were sung after the reading, the master of the house raising the tune; and a long extempore prayer closed the worship.

During the later years of Mr. Black's life there was some relaxation of the Sunday duties at home, and a more decided freedom in the observance of the day in foreign parts. But the general practice of the household continued the same to the last.

With all this strictness of religious observance, there was no gloom or sanctimoniousness. A superficial observer could hardly have imagined that the religious life of a man of his cheerfulness and gaiety of manner was dominated by such earnest, almost stern severity.

This remarkable combination of personal strictness and of toleration to others carries one back to the time of Oliver Cromwell, himself the grandest type of the religious opinions held by Adam Black. No other religious sect has more firmly believed in 'the inspiration of the Almighty;' no other has exercised more Christian and philosophical respect for the opinions of other men differing from themselves as far as East is from the West, than the Independent body. Adam Black, while firmly believing in his own Confession of Faith, had no desire to impose it on any other man as a symbol of orthodoxy, still less to make it the test of fitness to receive financial aid from the National Exchequer. He was equally ready to recognise the claims of Unitarian or Roman Catholic, though in personal belief he was diametrically opposed alike to both.

It was truly said of him by Russel of the

Scotsman, that Edinburgh had lost in Adam Black 'one of the noblest citizens she ever possessed.' That is his claim to enduring remembrance, and the reason for the production of this imperfect record of his life; a life which ought to be, to all generations of the youth of Scotland, an inspiring example of the virtues that have made their country respected and great.

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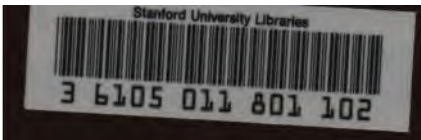

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